

NOTES

ABOUT

The Spirit's Operations,

For discovering from the Word, their
Nature and Evidence.

Together With

Diverse REMARKS, for Detecting the
Enthusiastical Delusions of the *Ceven-
nois, Antonia Bourignon*, and Others.

AS ALSO

Some Account of the Differences betwixt
a Legal and an Evangelical Admini-
stration.

BEING

The Substance of several Private Dis-
courses on G A L. III. 2.

By *James Hog* Minister of the Gospel.

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To The Right Honourable,
Major General *Maitland*,
His L A D Y
Theodosia Maitland.

Madam,

SE I N G your Ladyship's Desire obliged me to Review, and Inlarge the following Sheets, I thought it my Duty, to take the Occasion of Representing, that I highly Esteem and Honour, a Sincere and Active Concern about Matters relating to the Great Salvation, in an Age so far Degenerated,

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rated, that few Remain (especially among Persons of Note) who express any Regard unto the Honour of GOD, by laying out themselves for advancing the Interests of Religion in the Truths, and Exercise thereof; and particularly such as are more especially attacked in our Day. Matters were better stated in former Times, when a considerable Number of Persons of all Ranks, and severals of the highest Quality Espoused the Interests of Christ's Kingdom, and appeared with Resolution and Vigour for that pitch of Reformation, to which the Lord had Happily raised His Church in this Land; and was Sought, and aspired after from the Dawnings of reformed Light amongst us, and according to the Gradual Increase of that
 Light,

Light. But, tho' some Witnesses are found, yet how far the Crown is fallen from our Heads, in that, and other the most valuable Respects, my Soul desireth that a Gracious Retrieval may set in a clearer Light than I incline, in this manner to mention. If I should take this Opportunity to Narrate either my just Respects, or the Obligations which I owe to your Ladyship (tho' I want not sufficient Ground) yet I could not escape the Uneasiness of being reputed to have presumed beyond what your Modesty could allow: And therefore I rather chuse to be Silent, and Conclude, Subscribing my self

Madam,

Your Ladyship's

in all dutiful Respect,

James Hog.

TO THE
Christian and Candid
READER.

Reader,

THe Subsequent Discourses were exposed to thy View some years ago, and found Acceptance, tho' but the Heads were Published, with little more, and that Imperfectly, at these many Disadvantages which frequently attend such Publications, wherein an Author declineth to interest himself. This I represent, not from any Design to Excuse or Extenuate the weakness of this Performance, being deeply sensible, and covered with Blushes before the Lord, for many Unaccountable and Sinful Infirmities of Heart and Way, and which attend every part of my Administration. Notwithstanding, seeing these Notes were before thrust forth, with much Incorrectness, I could not refuse so far to comply with the Requests of some desireable Persons, as to Rectify and Enlarge them. For the

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To the Reader.

mean Work it self, be pleased to know, that,
as to the Scope and Substance, it containeth
the Result and Issue of many a Sharp Conflict
about the several Purposes, while the impetu-
ous Current of Corruption and Temptations
pushed strongly towards the Delusions there
Detected, until Sovereign Mercy interposed,
and the Lord sent forth his Light and Truth
in a Suitableness to the respective Straits, and
Intanglements. And, as this confirmeth,
and sweetneth my Mind in the strong Per-
suasion, and some Sense of the Efficacy of
the Truths themselves; so I hope that a
blunt and simple Account of Divine Conduct
in the Premisses, will find Acceptance with such
as are Exercised to Godliness, howsoever De-
stitute it be of these Ornaments, which Polite
Literature might have afforded. And, in
this Confidence, I recommend the poor Essay
to your serious Preusal, and the Blessing of
Him, who hath chosen the Weak Things of
the World; And remain

Yours, to Serve you in the

Work of the Gospel,

J. H.

Postscript.

Christian Reader,

I Designed a further Enlargement of these Notes, with an Accommodation to some things, which fell out since they were given in to the Press, (where they have continued long) and a particular Quotation of divers Authors, but being under Bodily Indisposition, and otherways Busied, I could not undergo the Labour; And I think not that the Little Work will suffer on that head.

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Courteous Reader,

SOME Escapes in Pointing, Spelling and Grammer have crept in, by reason of the Author's distance from the Press, which it is expected you will over-look: Be pleased to amend the few following.

PART. I.

Page 17. Line 2. for Cavenests, Read Cevenois. p. 17. l. 16. continued r. continue. p. 46. l. 18. speciality r. special. p. 125. l. 20. after Sinews r. of

PART. II.

Page 2. Line 28, for where read and. p. 5. l. 7. Office r. Offices. p. 6. l. 21. refused r. refuted. p. 12. l. 15. sheweth r. shewing. p. 18. l. 3. this r. thus. p. 23. l. 14. dele yea. p. 24. l. 1. subtiler r. subtilly. p. 31. l. 18. containeth r. continueth. p. 40. l. 15. dele and Lovers.

REMARKS

Concerning the Spirits Opporations,
and the Difference betwixt the
Law and Gospel, being the Heads
of some Family Exercises, upon

G A L. III. 2.

*This only would I learn of you, received ye the
Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the
hearing of Faith?*

THE Apostles of our Lord and
Saviour Jesus Christ, who were
Honour'd by Him to plant many
Famous Churches, acquitted themselves in
a faithful delivery of what they had re-
ceiv'd from the Lord; and in this manner
these Churches were Settled in a very
pure Estate, greatly conform unto the
compleat Patern, in all their Concerns,
B and

And among others, this Church had received the Doctrine of Salvation, from these Apostles of Christ; but when, and by whose Ministry it was at first, is uncertain, *Paul* travelled thither, *Acts* 16. 6. but was at that time forbidden of the Holy Ghost to tarry there, yet *Acts* 18. 23. It is said, he went over all the Countrys of *Galatia* and *Phrygia* in order, strengthening the Disciples.

I shall not enquire into the time of writing this Epistle, nor other things concerning which Interpreters may be Consulted; Only it is evident, that by this time they had fallen from their Stedfastness, and that fervent Affection which sometimes they bore unto the Apostle, for whose sake, if it had been possible, they would have pluckt out their very Eyes and given them unto him, *Gal.* 4. 15. But now the Case was changed, and therefore in the 1^{st.} v. of this Capter, he Challenges them powerfully and sharply, laying home upon their Consciences their Seduction by false Teachers, whose destructive Influence, is by him called *Be-witching*, which is a Power of Deceit, whereby Things are made to appear quite other-

otherways than they really are : Thus the God of this World by himself and his Instruments blindeth the Minds of Unbelievers. Gospel Purity is rarely attained, and when enjoyed, proveth but of a short Continuance : We quickly left our first Estate, and since our fall, it is our very Nature, as Corrupted, to weary of these Boundaries, which the Lord hath set, and to go out of them, on every offered Occasion ; as by a tract of constant Experience in Souls, and Churches, hath ever been sadly verified.

This their Sin was the greater, for that they had enjoyed much of a sweet, clear, and powerful Dispensation of the Gospel, as is most plainly and powerfully held forth in the close of this *Verse*, before whose Eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth as Crucified among you. Hence in the 2^d. he appeals to their Consciences, as, howsoever grievous the Defection was, yet not without some Impression of the great Difference betwixt their former faithful Teachers, and the false Apostles, who were seducing them, the Spirit having been conveyed by the Ministry of the one, and not of the other,

here upon he appealeth to the Testimony of Conscience, in this Case; and for their greater Conviction, submitteth himself, as willing to learn from them, not fearing the Testimony of their better part. It is the proper Season to oppose Defection in Souls, or Churches, when it is yet Recent, and a sweet Remembrance of the pure and primitive Institution is not obliterated; this Gangrene, may, through Grace, admit of an easy Cure in the Entrance, which yet becomes incurable in the progress; and prudential Considerations for hindering of the Cure, ought not to be regarded, such Wisdom descends not from above, Watch-men ought to be full of Eyes, and these Eyes kept open their sleeping provokes, & encourageth watchful Enemies to sow their Tares.

For opening of the Text, I shall propose, and Answer a few Questions.

Quest. 1. What are these Works of the Law of which the Text treateth?

Ans. 1. Ceremonial Institutions formerly abrogated, but now Received, Introduced, and Represented in the most favourable Dress by the false Apostles; Hereupon the Apostle Exhorts them to stand

stand fast to the Liberty wherewith Christ had made them free, and not to suffer a contrary Yoke of Bondage to be gradually wreath'd about their Necks, *Gal. 5. 1.* and that under a most awful Certification, *Behold I Paul say unto you, that if ye be Circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing. Ye observe, saith he, Days and Months, and Times and Years, I am afraid of you lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain, Chap. 4. v. 10. 11.* This Expedient, namely of retaining a part of the abrogated Ceremonies, was greatly urged by the Seducers of these Times, as the most proper Method to gratify the Flesh, and escape Suffering, yet still under a specious appearance of Religion, *As many, saith the Apostle, as desire to make a shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be Circumcised, only least they should suffer Persecution for the Cross of Christ.* The main pretext was taken from the Condition of the Church at that time, whose difficult Circumstances with the Jews, seemed to require some piece of Compliance of that kind, we ought indeed to become all things to all Men, in ways lawful, subservient to the Honour of God, and conducive for the Edifying of

His Church, 1 Cor. 9. 19, 20. But a sinfull accomodating of the Institutions of Christ to the Humours, Lusts, and Carnal Interests of Men, is highly displeasing to the Lord, and ruinous to the Church, howsoever supported by shadows of Reason and Conveniency; yea, and painted appearances of Spiritual Advantage.

2dly. It is more than probable that some parts of will Worship in Obedience to Mens Traditions, are understood, for such the false Apostles were very busie to introduce and maintain, Col. 2. 23. *Which things have indeed a shew of Wisdom in Will-worship and Humility, and neglecting of the Body, &c.* Neither could this well be evited, seing Reccessions from the Primitive Divine Institution, are still fertile of more.

3dly. I understand Works of whatsoever kind, tho' Moral, when made our Righteousness in part, or in whole, in the Matter of Justification, or leaned to any way, how Subtile soever; no stress may be laid on any thing but Christ the sure Foundation and Corner Stone; if otherways wicked Attempts are made to justle Him out of His Throne, Rom. 31.

19, 20, 21. *Gal.* 2. from 16. and 5. 4.
 The Opposition in this Case can admit of
 no Mids, if we put Works out of that
 Place, which our Sovereign Lord hath
 only allowed and allotted for them, we in
 so far Poison the Channel, and the influ-
 ences of Grace cannot be expected, throw
 a poisoned Channel; our proud Hearts
 will at best recede practically under the
 purest Doctrine; But how dangerous are
 Doctrinal Recessions.

4. Whatsoever is done from and for
 Self, and not by the Spirit of Christ, tho'
 it should deceive, under the appearance of
 Faith, is here understood; for as the
 Works of the Law are Evangelical Obe-
 dience, when perform'd by Faith in
 Christ; So Faith it self, or that which
 we so call, when Spun out of our own
 Bowels, is not true Faith, but an Adul-
 terated Work of the Law; no Out-
 goings of the Soul to the Lord, can either
 have place, or find Acceptance with him,
 but such as are the Fruits of his manifest-
 ing himself graciously unto the Soul; and
 as to saving Faith, the Power of the
 Lord, the exceeding Greatness of His
 Power, the working of His Mighty
 Power,

Power, even that Power which raised Christ from the Dead, are put forth, and are necessary to the working of it, *Eph. 1. 19, 20.* which clearly intimates an utter and sinful Inability on our part, and a mighty Work of Grace and Power from the Lord, whereby alone the Blessed Effect is produced; See further, *Gal. 2. 20. John 15. 5. 2 Cor. 3. 5. Gal. 5. 22. 23.*

Q. 2. What is meant by the hearing of Faith?

Ans. Some render it the Preaching or Doctrine of Faith, the Sence is one, I understand the pure Doctrine of Life and Salvation, as the same was Taught and enforced by the Apostles of Christ, and whereby the Gospel Covenant was cleared and vindicated, in Opposition unto the legal Perversions, by which the false Apostles corrupted that Covenant, wherein all revealed Truths concenter. It is called the Hearing or Doctrine of Faith, both from its Contents, the whole being fitly denominated from that, into which, in point of Doctrine, it is resolved, and considered as the Mother Grace doth influence the whole of a Christian Life; and also because of the Breathings of the Spirit attending and following that Doctrine, and

and by which Faith, and consequently the other Graces of the Spirit are wrought as a confirming Seal of the alone true Doctrine of Life, 2 Cor. 3. 1, 2, 3, and 1. 9, 2. this in general.

More particularly the Expression implyeth, 1st. Their Commission, as being indeed Apostles, *For how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a Preacher; and how shall they preach except they be sent,* Rom, 10. 14. Thus the false Apostles are plainly Taxed, who amidst all their specious Pretexts, had truly run unsent. 2^{dly}. The Expression implyeth, That what they Taught of the great Mysterys of Salvation, was the Lords Message; which, as they receiv'd it from him, so the rejecting thereof, was indeed a rejecting of the Lord: awful is that Hedge, which the great Sheephord of his Sheep hath set about his sent Servants, *He that heareth you heareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me,* Luke 10. 16. Math. 10. 40. 1 John 4. 6. This I confess affordeth no handle for false Teachers, yet a Rejection of such as are true, goes very high, being a Rejecting of one God, Father

Father, Son and Holy Ghost, *He that despiseth you, despiseth me, &c.*

3dly. The Words do also denote some what of the Lords special Presence, and the Efficacy of the Administration for working of Faith, and therefore call'd *The hearing of Faith*, seing the Lord had spoken to their Hearts by his Word and Spirit, and thus had brought them to Believe, for Faith resteth intirely, and only upon his Testimony; this was a speaking from Faith to Faith, and great is the Happiness when these concur, 2 Cor. 5. 20. and 3. 6.

Quest. 3. *What are we to understand by receiving the Spirit?*

Ans. 1. It may be implied here, That they did, or might have received other things, and such, upon which the false Apostles valued themselves, as Knowledge, Utterance, and a fair shew of Piety, 1 Cor. 13. 2. Col. 2. 23. tho' the Spirit they received not.

2dly. We are not to understand by the Expression such Motions of the Spirit as are meerly Transient, without a Gracious Inhabitation, whether the Person do thereby move in a more ordinary, or in an

extraordinary Sphere ; For tho' I see no Cause to grant, that even such Motions were bestowed upon the Ministry of the false Apostles, yet they can come in no Account as accompanying Salvation ; seeing in these Events, the Lord doth but take the Instrument out of Satans hand, and useth it a while for some Work, which being done, he giveth it back to Satan again, as a great Divine, significantly expressed it, in the case of *Balaam*, *Numb.* 22. 23. compare *Math.* 7. 21, 22. and *Heb.* 6. 4. this in a word Negatively.

More positively we are to understand, a special Inhabitation of the Spirit of God, which is the Privilege of all Believers, and was the blest Enjoyment of many belonging to that Church : This is the grand Source of Perseverance, seeing the Spirit of God will never leave his Habitation, tho' Pretenders fall off, and Believers themselves will be sore Thrust at ; this appeareth, if we compare *1 Cor.* 3. 16. *Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you, and* 6. 19. As also *Rom.* 8. 9.

2. The

2. The Designation containeth likewise all the Graces of the Spirit, as necessarily accompanying the Inhabitation of the Spirit himself, namely *Faith, Virtue, Patience, Meekness, Temperance, &c.* 2 *Per.* 1. 5, 6. Our Lord bringeth his excellent Furniture along with him, when he takes up House in, and with the Soul.

3. Understand also a receiving the Gifts of the Spirit, both Ordinary and Extraordinary, which much abounded at that time, and were necessary, as a sealing Work at the first planting of Christian Churches, *Joh.* 7. 39. This he spoke of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should Receive, for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet Glorified, compare *Acts* 19. 2, and *Gal.* 5. 22. Nor have some such been ever wanting in any Age, but chiefly have they abounded in more extraordinary Seasons, and at the Reformation of Churches from Antichristianism and Heathenism.

Quest. 4. What may be implied in the conveyance of this Purpose, by way of Question, received ye the Spirit?

Ans. 1.

Ans. 1. This Conveyance expresseth the more fully and pointedly, the Power and Evidence of the Truth, as that to which their own Conscience could not but bear Testimony.

2. Their strange Infatuation and Stupidity is thereby pointed at, as inexcusable, in their not having adverted unto, or being carryed off from the plain Truth in this Matter, which also is declared to have been the Fruit of a sort of Witchcraft. *v. 1.*

3. This Conveyance was most apposite to Rouse and Pose their sleeping and silent Consciences, and thereby to raise them unto an unbyassed Consideration of this Matter ; See the like Method, *Gal. 4. 16.*

EXERCISE II.

THE former Hints for Exposition of the Text, may open our Way to the raising of several Doctrinal Positions from it ; yet I wave them, and shall chuse

chuse out this One, as chiefly suiting the design of these Discourses, and to raise the first part of this little tract upon it, reserving one other, as a Foundation for the Second. Observe then, that the Lord is pleased to convey the Influences of his Grace, and the benefits of his Purchase throw the Channel of his Word, without revealing any new Doctrine, detracting from, or altering that which is revealed, but keeping the whole pure, intire, and in its Native Sense. I express the Doctrine the more largely, and in a paraphrastical way, designing to clear and evince the several particulars in our Progress; For in whatsoever manner the Christian be exercised about the Word, the Channel throw which the Spirits Influences are carryed in upon the Heart, is still the same, whether it be read, *John* 5. 39. *Dut.* 6. 5, 6, 7. *Col.* 3. 16. pondered in Meditation, *Pf.* 1. 2. *1 Tim.* 4. 15. *Pf.* 119. 97. conferred about, *Luk.* 24. 33. or prayed upon, *Pf.* 119. 5. and throughout, and when used as the only Rule for self-Examination, *2 Cor.* 13. 5. *Pf.* 4. 4. particularly when sincerely preached and received, seeing Faith comes by hearing, and

and hearing by the word of God, see the Context, *Rom.* 10. from 13.

The Doctrine considered generally, may be Illustrated and confirmed from the following Passages of Scripture, *Isa.* 8. 21. *1 Cor.* 11. 2. *1 John* 1. 2. *1 Cor.* 15. 3, 4. and many others, which at present I only name, seeing they are to fall under a more particular Consideration in our progress. I shall now endeavour a little further to open up the Doctrine, and so to lay the more clear and sure Foundation for supporting the following purposes, to which effect I represent these Positions.

Pos. 1. The Doctrine of Salvation display'd in *Paradise*, was not for several Ages consigned into Writing, but preserved and propogated in a more immediate way until the Days of *Moses* the first inspir'd Writer, nevertheless the Channel (may I so call it) of Divine Influences, was at that time, and continueth to be one and the same, namely the Lords Word, which tho' then not written, was yet kept pure and intire, being the matter of constant Exercise to Believers in their Worship and Way, and revived with a gradual Increase of Evidence, by the Discoveries which

which our Lord gave in Dreams and Visions, with various Appearances, and sometimes in humane Shape, which he graciously vouchsafed, as preludes of his Incarnation, *Gen. 12. 1, 2. and 13, 14, 15, 1, 2, 12, 13, &c.*

Pos. 2. Though this manner of Conveyance suffic'd, while the Church was contain'd within the narrow bounds of a few Families; yet it was not so common to all within the Church, but that the Lord would have them to be train'd up, by External Teaching of the Patriarchs, and so convey'd the Blessings of the Covenant by that Ordinance, thus commending to us from the Oldest Times, that Blest Institution. All had not such immediate Manifestations; *Abraham* was a Prophet, and in this preferr'd to others, who might have had the Root of the Matter in them, *Gen. 18. 17, 18. Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do, seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty Nation, and all the Nations of the Earth shall be blessed in him: -* And in aftertimes the necessity of this Ordinance was still cleared more and more, this displayeth the loathsome and dangerous Gangrene of De-

Delusion among the pretendedly inspir'd Cavenests, and others the like Enthusiasts, who, to say nothing of their unscriptural and abject strain, both as to Matter and Words, do all of them set up immediately for Teachers, and make their very first Appearances with that pretended Authority, without any shadow of Call or Necessity, while of a few met in a Corner, a goodly Number at once belcheth forth their Preachments: Our Lord condescended to shew his Commission, *Heb. 5. 4, 5.* But you must excuse them, except you take the direful Agitations of a disordered Body and Brain, or other such like stuff, for a sufficient Warrant,

Pos. 3. Altho' the Revelations given to *Moses*, the first inspir'd Writer, were not convey'd throw any written Channel; yet such sure Grounds are laid down in the Books penned by him, that all after Revelations, chiefly as to Matters of Doctrine, are contain'd in, and deduceable from them: Yea, we have the summ of the whole Gospel in that first Promise, That the Seed of the Woman shall bruise the Serpent's head, *Gen. 3. 15.* which Promise is further enlarged throughout the whole

Word, and the Lord Jesus testifyeth, *Joh.* 5. 45, 46, 47. that *Moses* wrote of him, and cleareth the Resurrection from the Dead, as written by *Moses*, *Math.* 22. 31, 32. *Exod.* 3. 6.

Thus, tho' the Testimony of the Lord of Glory, sufficed to support the Doctrine which he taught; yet our Lord Jesus was pleased to instruct, each Point from the written Word, both to evince the pleasant Harmony of every Piece, from the first dawning in Paradise, and to shew the indispensable Obligation we are under to advance and receive nothing, as any part of the Lords revealed Will, in point of Truth, Duty, or any Religious Concern, save that which the Lord holds forth in his Word; And we ought to be in a readiness from thence to make out, especially when requir'd, *1 Pet.* 3. 15.

Pos. 4. Hence, whatever was added by inspir'd Writers in after times, is found not only conform to what was written by him, namely *Moses* being the same Doctrine Further enlarg'd; but is likewise referr'd to these Books; For still the following Writers have regard to the preceding, and build upon their

Foun-

Foundation: And in the close of the Old Testament we have that remarkable Injunction, *Mal. 4. 4. Remember ye the Law of Moses my Servant, which I commanded him in Horeb, for all Israel, with the Statutes and Judgments*: Here is a Reference to the whole, under the Designation of the Law of *Moses*, being the Doctrine of Salvation suited to that Dispensation, and harmoniously taught by him and all the Prophets, according to what was foretold, *Deut. 18. 18.* to be that Doctrine which should be taught in a continued Succession, until the Appearance of the Lord Jesus the great Prophet. See further *Heb. 3.* throughout, and even under the New Testament, the Doctrine is Demonstrated from the Old, on all occasions, *Math. 13. 13, 14.* so *Luke 24. 25, 26, 27.* Then he said unto them, *O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken, ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his Glory, and beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself*: Thus so soon as the word was consign'd into writing, we had a written Touch-stone and Standard, according

to which Spirits were to be try'd, Persons, Doctrines, and Practices to be examin'd: The whole Centereth here, namely that before any part of the Canon was written, the Substance of the Doctrine of Salvation was display'd in Paradice, and the great Mystery of Redemption there laid down in a short, but clear, full, and comprehensive summ: And as upon the Rock there discovered, the Church was built from the beginning, So, the Divine Manifestations given at that time, were all of a piece, being built upon Confirmatory, and Illustrative of the Grounds first laid down by our Gracious Lord, as appeareth now, that so much thereof as was needful for Faith and Life, is by Divine Inspiration clearly written. Thus Matters were kept to a clear Rule and Standart in these first Ages, until that afterward the Lord gave by *Moses* a whole System of revealed Truth, which by Divine Inspiration was consign'd into Writing: And as the whole succeeding Fabrick is rais'd upon, and supported by that Ground Work, which was just now observ'd; So the greatest Change that ever was made, *Viz.* The establishing a
new

new Oeconomy of the Gospel Covenant, upon the Ruins of the Old, is yet particularly and largely Demonstrated by the Apostle, in his Epistle to the *Hebrews* from the Grounds laid down in the Books of *Moses* and the Prophets, as clearing the same Doctrine: This great Change having been made not only in a conformity to these Grounds, but also pre-signified, pointed at, and prophecy'd of, as the Scope, Life, and Marrow of that whole Dispensation, all which, great D. *Owen* evinceth at length in his profound and elaborate Commentary upon the Epistle to the *Hebrews*.

Pos. 5. Tho' before that any part of the Canon was written, the Lord did frequently manifest Himself, and declare his Will by Extatical Visions, Dreams, and Voices, and this was continued throughout the old Dispensation of the Gospel Covenant; yet still in a Suitableness to the fixed Rule and confirmatory of the received Standart, as aforesaid; As also without Prejudice of the Blessed Ordinance of publick and Authoritative Teaching, but really for a necessary Help to that Teaching; And altho' we

Read of this also under the New Testament, before the Canon was fully written, *Act* 9. 12. and 10. 9, 10, 11. and *Rev.* 1. 10, 11, 12, &c. Notwithstanding, seeing these Visions are now on Record, and the Canon is compleatly written, we have no Warrant to look out for, or lay Stress upon such things; and to be sure, the Scripture being compleat, we are to expect no Discovery of any thing which is not contained in, and built upon the same. The Rule is plain, *2 Pet.* 1. 19. *We have also a more sure word of Prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.* From which Passage, observe these few particulars to our purpose, 1. That this sure word of Prophecy, and this alone, is our Light, as being the only and compleat Rule of Faith and Life; So that whatsoever besides it, pretends to be Light, is really but Darknes, *Isa.* 8. 20. *To the Law and to the Testimonys, if they speak not according to these it is, because there is no light in them.* 2. As this Light abundantly sufficeth, being fully adjusted to all the ends of its appointment; So it were

were a high Reflection upon the Wisdom and Goodness of God, in bestowing it to entertain the least Thought, as if we needed any other, and look as the Pillar of Cloud and Fire (to which the Text aludeth) pointed out the way to the Israelites till they reached *Canaan*; so doth the word of the Lord point out his way compleatly, both to them in their Day, and now unto us, all other Lights would have been Seductive and Ruining, compare *Psal.* 119. v. 9. 105. 3. Nothing but the Light of Glory can succeed to this, when the Day dawneth, and the Day Star ariseth in the Heart, the Light of Glory, and that Light alone can Out-shine it, *Rev.* 21. 22, 23. *And I saw no temple there, for the Lord God almighty and the Lamb are the Temple of it, and the City had no need of the Sun, neither of the Moon to shine in it, for the Glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof: And* 22. 5. *And there shall be no Night there, and they shall need no Candle, neither light of the Sun, for the Lord God giveth them Light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.* Hence Visions, Voices, and Dreams, are no bottom on which we may build, and we ought

ought to cease from regard to them, assuredly none of our pretended Voices or Visions may compare with that which is Recorded, *Math.* 17. 1, 2, 3. concerning Christ's Transfiguration, and the Voice from Heaven, saying in v. 5. *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased,* to which this Text hath respect; and yet we are called off from that, as sounding from Heaven to the same now written in the Scriptures, that we may wholly and only rest and settle upon this sure word of Prophecy.

This pointeth out the Venom of Delusion in Enthusiastical Pretenders, whatsoever may be its various Dress: And for instance, view the prophetical Warnings of *Elias Marion*, and others pretended to be Discourses uttered under the Inspiration of the Spirit. Let us try this Spirit, and consider for that Effect, these following particulars. 1. The sure word of Prophecy is over-lookt and laid aside, as of no use in this Matter: Our Lord Jesus built upon the Foundation of *Moses* and the Prophets, but here the whole Scriptures, tho' undoubtedly given by Divine Inspiration, are pretermitted intirely, and
new

new Light pretended, which is solely founded upon the Authority of the Revealer, they do not so much as attempt to apply the written word, to the respective Cases, as if it were no more fit for such uses; But if these Prophecys, or propheticall Warnings be what is pretended, they must be received as so much of new Scripture, given by immediate Inspiration; and if ye allow the same Liberty to others, who have as much to pretend as can be alledged in the present Case, we are carried intirely off from the Foundation, and expose our selves as a Prey to every pretending Deluder: Thus all Divine Faith and Religion is gone, the sure Word of Prophecy recorded in the Scripture, being quite enervated.

2. Not to engage into a particular Disquisition, seing such empty Dotages deserve not to be considered so far, I represent in General, that the Scop and Tenor of their Warnings, is quite contrary to the Scriptures of Truth: It is the plain and harmonious Doctrine of the Word, that the only way to Restauration of Souls and Churches, is the way of Humiliation under the mighty Hand of God,

God, *Jsa.* 4. 10. *1 Pet.* 5. 6. *Hos.* 6. 1, 2. *Job.* 40. 2, 3, 4. and 42. 4, 5, 6. *Deut.* 32. 39. *1 Sam.* 2. 6. Assuredly the Divine Testimony is plain, *Levit.* 26. *throughout*, and *v.* 23. 24. *If ye will not be reformed by these things, but will walk contrary unto me, saith the Lord, then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times more for your Sin*; But instead of this, these pretended Revelations are generally stuffed with a nauseous Repetition of great Deliverances to an impenitent People, without discovering even the manifest Causes of a righteous Controversy with them; And as for some little Insinuations of Sin, which are overly dropt, these are very General and Superficial, save that a Regardlesness of their pretended Inspirations is more closely taxed.

3. There is no Cause to be amused by their Pretences and specious Appearance of Devotion, seing besides that there is no Ground to admire them on that head, the little they have of that sort, runeth out intirely in the Channel of the Covenant of Works: The very Name of Christ is so exceeding Rare in these Prints, that I remember not to have found it so much

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as once in a great deal, which I Read on design, but as to a strain of Evangelical Dependence, and the deriving of Life, Strength, and every thing from the last *Adam*, the alone quickening Spirit, and that in the Exercise of saving Faith, from a humble Sense of utter Insufficiency on the Creatures part : It were a vain Attempt to seek or expect any thing of that sort in those, by some, so much applauded Writings.

But not to insist further at present, I only subjoin, *Fourthly*, As to some alledged Miraculous Events for Confirmation of those pretended Inspirations (not now to debate the Credit of the Narration) I observe that the Spirit of the Lord removeth all Umbrage of Difficulty, on this head, by wairning us expressly, that the false Prophet may give a Sign, and the Sign may come to pass, the Lord so ordering the Matter for Trial, *Deut.* 13. 1, 2, 3. The gross and sottish Delusions of the Papacy are not one white the better of these Lying Wonders, which first introduced and continued to support them, and the consequence is the same in either of the Cases, that is quite nought
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in them both, 2 *Thess.* 2. 8, 9, 10, 11. And it may be added, That their Lying Wonders and Prophecies, have more than once deceived them, and blasted their Credit.

EXERCISE, III.

Pof. 6. **T**HE Doctrine is not to be understood so, as if all these Influences were still conveyed by particular Passages of Scripture (though often and ordinarily they are so) but sometimes they may flow in by the Lord's shining on Scriptural Truths, tho' without respect to one particular Passage; yet still the Matter must be Scriptural, and upon further Thoughts (especially when try'd) the exercised Person will be made to see its Foundation upon one or more places of Scripture; Yea, sometimes the purpose (being still Scriptural) may be first shined upon: For Example, The Incarnation and Passion of Christ, Death and
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Judgment, or such like, and the Scriptures apposite to these Purposes, afterwards set home: On the other hand, and more frequently, the Spirit of the Lord Breatheth, first, on a particular Word, and then deduceth things suitable from it, or rather sheweth them to be in it. The Holy one of *Israel* is not to be Limited, his Methods are various, but all serve the same end, either the exercised Soul is led from the Word to things contain'd in it, or by these back to the Word; And tho' there be here some variety both in different Persons, and as to the same Person at different Seasons, yet still the Foundation is one. The leading of the Spirit, and evidence of the Word, go inseparably together, and the more clearly the better.

Pos. 7. Discoveries of things to come bestowed by the Lord, more largely upon some of his Dear Saints, with respect to the issues of Exercises or Interprizes; (As *Pf. 25. 14. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his Covenant. And Joh. 16. 13. But whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he will shew you things to come.*) Are no Additions

ons to the Word, but Applications thereof to particular Cases contain'd in the same, which could not have been seen without such Manifestations ; as put the Case some one, or more of the Promises, *Pf. 91. viz.* Deliverance from the Pestilence, or other Dangers were set home on the Heart of an exercised Person, with respect to his particular Circumstances : There is no shadow of Addition here to the Word, only Promises made by the Spirit of the Lord, are applyed according to their Scop, and that which is plainly design'd in them. But much Caution ought to be used here, with a Holy fear of Straying ; and Room is to be left both for further Discoveries, and rectifying what may be amiss, by the mixture of our Reasonings which bemist us, when left to them. *The Commandment is exceeding broad*, Who can measure its vast Dimensions ? *Pf. 119. 96.*

Pos. 8. To clear further the Irradiations of the Spirit upon the Lord's Word, or Work on the Soul ; I find the Light of the Sun often alluded to in Scripture, *Mal. 4. 2. But unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with heal-*

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ing in his Wings. 2 Cor. 4. 6. For God who made (or commanded) the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts, or Souls, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ. See Eph. 5. 13. Whatsoever doth make manifest is light. John 9. 5. I am the light of the world. From which, and more such places we may glean the following Remarks, for clearing this purpose, partly for Illustration, partly in a way more directly Argumentative. 1. As the Earth, and things contain'd in it, and upon which the Sun shineth, are pre-existent to its shining; yet refreshed and cherish'd by the warm and nourishing Influence of its pleasant Beams; So the Influences of Grace conveyed into the Heart throw the Channel of the now written Word: Pre-suppose the only Rule, which is indeed opened, and efficaciously applyed in that manner, but without any Alteration; And, to be sure, the Rule can never be kept so pure and intire, as it must needs be when in the hands of the Author. 2. As the clearest and sweetest Evidence of the Sun's Light, cannot be perceived without Eyes (for Mid-day is as Mid-night to him

him that wants them) so Spiritual things revealed in the Word, and from thence held forth by the Spirit of God, can never be rightly understood until the Eyes be opened; *For the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, they are foolishness to him, &c.* 1 Cor. 2. 14. *Yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and Eyes to see, and Ears to hear, unto this day, Deut. 29. 4. The eyes of your understanding being enlightened: that you may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the Riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, Eph. 1. 17, 18, 19.* Which premised, I observe in a suitableness to our purpose, the particulars following, all manifest in the Sun's Light. 1. Clear and satisfying Evidence, that of the Sun Beams is the clearest to Sense, and far beyond what Artificial Luminaries can produce; and this hath a satisfying and ravishing Evidence, which so filleth and replenisheth the new Creature, that I cannot cloath it with Words, *Eph. 5. 13. 2 Cor. 4. 6.* 2. As in the Sun's Light, so here, Glory and Majesty accompany Evidence; and thus the Believer enjoyeth him whom he seeth, and possesseth the first Fruits of a
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heavenly Harvest, *Pf. 19. 5. Job. 3. 36. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, &c. chap. 17. 3. And this is life eternal that they might know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. 3. This Majesty is tempered with sweetness, attended with refreshing Warmth, and crowned with desirable Fruits, through the concurrence of sweet and seasonable Showrs. Somewhat of all this is in the Similitude, but these Shadows disappear before the Substance. The whole and more of this sort being verified in the Spirits Influences, as carried in upon the Soul thorow the Channel of the Word. By these the Soul is sweetned, refreshed, strengthened, and bringeth forth Fruit unto Holiness. Yet still the Rule is one and the same, without the least Variation, *Isa. 8. 20. To the law and to the testimony, 1. Cor. 2, 9. 11, 12. But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love him, &c. See Isa. 44. 3, 4, 5. chap. 2. 5. 2 Cor. 3. 18. 2 Pet. 1. 19. We have also a more sure word of prophesie.**

EXERCISE, IV.

I Now proceed to the Confirmation of the Point, by the following Proofs or Grounds.

Proof 1. All the Arguments by which the Perfection of the Holy Scriptures is evinced, do likewise demonstrate this; for as much as any new Revelation, or any thing in the least tending to diminish or alter the Word, were inconsistent with this Perfection, as it is manifest: And the low vilifying Expressions of a Dead Letter, *Rudiments* for Children and such like, which Enthusiasts use (in this symbolizing with *Papists*, *Socinians*, and other Hereticks) abundantly hold forth, that they do not sincerely own this Perfection, which yet the Scripture clearly asserteth, and our Divines have abundantly proven in their Writings upon the head, which may be Consulted. And the consequence is easie and obvious; for if the Scriptures

tures be perfect (which I presuppose as a received and a sufficiently evinced Protestant Principle) then they contain all that we are to believe, and are the alone compleat Rule of Heart and Life in every thing. Now the Canon being compleat (as said is) and the whole given by Divine Inspiration ; assuredly we may expect no other Teaching of the Spirit, save the opening and applying of this Rule, and opening of the Heart to receive and comply with what we are therein Taught, and all in an exact suitableness to the Rule, without the least strain. What then can be added, Diminished, or Altered, without a manifest Imputation of Deficiency unto, or of somewhat amiss, and that needeth Amendment in the Canon its self, and from what Spirit such things proceed, let the Christian Reader Judge? See *Pf. 19. 7, 8, 9, 10. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul : the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple, &c. 2 Tim. 3. 15. Pf. 119 throughout.*

Proof 2. It appeareth likeways from the peremptory Prohibitions which we have in the Word, whereby the adding any thing to, or impairing any thing from

it, is discharged under the most dreadful Certifications, especially *Rev. 22. 18. 19.* where it is shut up thus, *For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the Prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, &c.* This doth not only clear and demonstrate the Truth of the Doctrine, but giveth us also the just Character of all Pretenders to new Revelations, by which they intail upon themselves all these Curses, and ought to be looked on as under them, whatsoever extravagant heights of Spirituality they boast of: Such Elevations are certainly the Product of Evil Spirits, howsoever deceiving under a specious Vail: as the Serpent of old deceived *Eve* by his Subtility, *2 Cor. 11. 3.* And, if signal Mercy prevent not, will sink the Poor deluded Wretches into a proportioned depth of Destruction.

If it be excepted that we find the like Prohibition in the Scriptures themselves, before that solemn one *Rev. 22.* which
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shutteth up the Canon, namely, *Deut.* 4. 2. and 12. 32. *You shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall you diminish ought from it, &c.* *Prov.* 30. 6. *Add not unto his words lest he reprove thee.* And yet a great deal more hath been added since, which we, notwithstanding, acknowledge to belong unto the Canon its self, and to be of the same Authority with the rest. I Answer, 1. That the Prohibition layeth an awful Bar upon every Creature, and strictly dischargeth their meddling; but without prejudice of further Enlargements to be made by the Lord himself. 2. Even these Enlargements were spoken of by *Moses*, under the Inspiration of the Spirit of God, who expressly fortold that the Lord would raise up unto them, from among their brethren, a prophet like unto himself, and I will (saith the Lord) put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not harken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him, *Deut.* 18. 18, 19. See *Gen.* 49. 10. *Isa.* 4. 2. compared with *Joh.* 1. 45. *Acts* 2. 22. and 7. 37. *Heb.* 3. 1, 2, 3, 4. &c.

Thus all is kept within the verge of what the Lord spoke by *Moses*, and the whole old Oeconomy pointed at the new. Hence, 3. The Doctrine is still the same, and the whole superstructure, even of inspired Writings, was raised upon, and deduced from the Foundations at first laid down, and afterwards consigned into writing by *Moses* at the Commandment of the Lord, until the whole was sealed up by the fore-said peremptory prohibition, *Rev.* 22. 18, 19.

Proof 3. All the Passages by which we are ascribed to this Rule, and commanded to bring every Doctrine and Practice to this Touchstone, do fully demonstrate the certainty of the Doctrine; I shall instance but in a few, *Isa.* 8. 20. *To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them, Act.* 17. 11. *These were more noble than those of Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether these things were so.* 2 *Pet.* 1. 19. *We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto you do well to take heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place.* Here is the sure Standart, and

and unerring Rule, by which the Spirits are to be tryed, *Gal. 1. 7. 8, 9. Though we or an Angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel unto you, then that ye have received, let him be accursed.* See also *1 Joh. 4. 1.* and when receding from it, they ought to be rejected with Detestation. What place then is left for new Revelations? Are they from the Lord, then must they be a Standart, and then were we required to have regard to another than the Word, which would expose us to be dragged after the Delusions and Fancies of every new Pretender to such Revelations, who agree not with themselves, far less with the Truth. And it is truly observable that such Pretenders fall into the most damnable and gross Errors, contrary to the plain letter of the Word, besides execrable Abominations of Practice, to which God hath righteously given up many of them; for the Works of the Flesh are near of Kindred to one another, and Heresies are reckoned up amongst the grossest of them, *Gal. 5. 20. Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, &c.* See also *2 Thes. 2. 11, 12. And for this cause*
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God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie, that they might be all damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. Here we have a part of the righteous Execution of these fore-mentioned Curses, and an awful Document of Sobriety and keeping close to the Word. Hence these highest Flights, and most specious Simblances of Spirituality, do yet open the two leav'd Gates to the most execrable Errors and Abominations, and remove the great Barrier against Atheism its self, by undermining the Credit of the only Rule. And tho' a regard to it be pretended to cover the Deceit (which otherways would be too open) yet its Credit cannot be sincerely maintained, unless we bring every thing to this alone Touch-stone, and peremptorly refuse to receive any thing but that which is contain'd in, and rightly deduc'd from the Canon. And if any other pretended Revelation be set upon an equal Level, as in that case, we have no more any fixed Standart; so there would remain nothing to stop the Current towards the vilest Heresies and Abominations whatsoever,

soever, under the fair pretences of Inspiration. This is worse than any Heresie, because, in this way, Lying and Murdering Spirits have opened a Conveyance for whatsoever of venome they please to instill. And were they capable of Delight, I think they would enjoy much of it ; while, as Gods, they Deck themselves with Majesty, and Dictate their Revelations to their silly deluded Votaries, who receive them upon their own Credit, and thus give unto Devils the greatest Honour that we are capable to give unto the true God in Time, namely to believe them, and that most firmly, meerly upon their Word.

Proof 4. The Truth of the Point is further made out and confirm'd from the design of the Word read, meditated upon, and preached, &c. which is to be *a light and a lamp to our paths, to make the man of God perfect, to edify the body of Christ, till we all come unto a perfect man unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,* Ps. 119. 105. 2 Tim. 3. 15, 16. Eph. 4. 12, 13. These are the ends for which the Word is appointed. And for inforcing the Evidence we may observe,

1. That

1. That this Mean, and no other is appointed by the Lord for all these Ends, which ends are to be attained only through the Influences of his Grace, as the forementioned Passages clear. We read of no other Mean, yea, are discharged peremptorly from all regard to any other.

2. That, through the Lords Blessing, it is sufficient (as a Mean) for all these Ends, having not only the fitness resulting from the Lord's appointment, as the *brazen Serpent* had, *Joh. 3. 14.* but likewise intrinsical Excellencies stamped upon it, *Psf. 119. 129. 130.* and throughout, *Psf. 19. 7, 8, &c.* suited to the Ends for which it is given, and fully evincing it to be the Lord's Word; hence no place can be left for extrascriptural Revelations, or any thing reflecting upon this compleat Rule. All centereth here (to represent the Argument distinctly in its parts) namely, 1. That all the ends, which we may, or ought to propose to our selves, and all the true Uses of a *Canon* are clearly and fully condescended upon in the Scriptures. 2. These Scriptures are abundantly sufficient to, and
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compleatly fitted for these Ends and Uses. There's a blessed Company in the higher House, who were brought to it by the sweet Conduct of the Word and Spirit, and the rest are upon the way pressing thither, and shall reach the happy End under the same Guidance, *being sanctified by the truth, and the word of the Lord is that truth*, Joh. 17. 17. In this manner, and by walking in the paths chalked out therein, *an entrance is ministred unto the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, 2 Pet. 1. 11.

3. Unto this alone Rule we are strictly charged to Advert, and inhibited from regarding any other, as was above cleared, *Is. 8. 20. and 59. 21. 2 Pet. 1. 19.* And the thing is evident in its self; For as there can be no shadow of Pretence for New Revelations, without designing a high regard to be payed to the same; so no respect can be had to any such Revelations, without a proportioned detracting from the compleat Deference, which we owe to the alone perfect, and now written Rule: And as it ever was, and continueth to be the grand Project of Hell, by such false Lights to
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lead off from the only paved way into Precipices of Errors, and Abominations of all sorts, so the sad Fruits have verified the design, as appeareth among other Instances from that Mass of Errors and Blasphemies, which go under the Name of *Antonia Burignon*, and were Condemned by an Assembly of this National Church. The whole Mass is made up of Errors, Heresies, Blasphemies, and a Prophane Mixture of Philosophy. The former have been a Thousand times Refuted, and the other ought not to be Repeated, as *Hezekiah* forbade to Answer *Rabshakeh's* Blasphemies, *If* 36. 21.

Proof 5. The Truth of the Doctrine is also evinced from the Harmonious Experience of the Cloud of Witnesses, as the same is Recorded in the Word, and hath been accordingly verified in all Ages; who all built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, *Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone*, Eph. 2. 20. see also *Heb. 11. Ps. 1. and 121.* And if it was thus before the Consummation of the Canon (as was above cleared) much more ought we now to Tremble at the least

least Récession from it, and abhor the Thoughts of founding upon any other Bottom after the Compleatment. In this manner these Champions and the sweet Company of ordinary Believers *Fought the good Fight, kept the Faith, and finished their Course*; And it is only in this Confidence that we can enjoy the Delicious Prospect of our Lord's *appearing to be glorified in his Saints, and admir'd in all them that believe*, 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. 2 Thes. 1. 10.

Use 1. Of Vindication. For improvement of this Doctrine, I shall in the first place take off some Aspersions cast upon the Exercise of Religion, and Persons acquainted with it, in so far as they Reflect upon the Word, and the Operations of the Lord's Spirit.

Aspersions 1. It is alledged, that what is imputed to a special Work of the Spirit in the Case, may flow from Natural Causes, the Advantages of Temperament, or at best from free Will, assisted with such Helps as *Arminian* Grace pretends to add to it.

Ans. Tho' there be very little shadow of Strength in this and other such like Cavils,

Cavils, yet I shall take them under some particular Consideration, not only upon the account of the cleaving of corrupt Nature, to whatsoever may cherish Prejudices against Religion, but also because the exercised Soul will not readily be found free of Temptations suggesting this. I shall then labour to prove a Supernatural Work of the Spirit, from the Word, in the saving Change, which is wrought upon the Soul by true Religion, whether in the first Conversion, or after Progress. This appeareth from the following Grounds:

Ground 1. The Scriptural Expressions adhibited by the Spirit of the Lord to denote this Work, do clearly evince its Greatness, together with a Speciality, and saving Efficacy of the Spirit in effectuating it. Take for instance these following, 1. A Creation, whercof the Product is a *New Creature*, both the Work and Effect transcending the first and old Creation, *Eph. 2. 10. 2 Cor. 4. 6.* and *5. 17.* 2. Araising from Spiritual Death to an Estate of Life, *Joh. 5. 25. Eph. 2. 1.* 3. A new Birth, *Joh. 3. 3. Ja. 1. 18.* *Of his own will begat he us with*
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the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures. And moreover, 4. It is such a work of Grace and Power, as removeth Satan's Image, and and by imprinting Christ's Image, rendereth the Person (as the State of sinful Creatures can allow) a partaker of the Divine Nature, 2 Pet. 1. 4. From which, take these few Remarks, 1. Seing such Expressions represent a Change, than which, there is nothing in Nature so Great and Glorious, they assuredly hold forth the workings of Omnipotent Power beyond the Sphere of Creatures. 2. As they denote this Change in common Providence, so it were quite to enervate the significant energy of Scriptural Expressions, should we alledge that all this must be understood in a low and diminutive Sense. To use such Glosses, were rather a ridiculing of Scripture than an opening of it. 3. As the forementioned are clear, pointed and expressive to this purpose, so higher Expressions are used, and such as vastly surpass the Contrivance of Men or Angels, *The power of God, the exceeding greatness of his power, the workings of his mighty power, even that*
power

power which raised Christ from the dead, are put forth towards them that believe, both in the Entrance and Progress of the work. See *Eph.* 1. 17, 18, 19. and 2 *Thes.* 1. 11. *Eph.* 3. 18, 19, 20. &c. Hence, either a Supernatural work of Grace, and Power must be acknowledged in this Matter, or it is impossible that such a Work should be said to be, in any Case, for Words more significant than Seraphims could devise are used in Scripture to express it: And if such overwhelming Evidences be eluded in this Case, we might with more shadow, utterly deny the Old Creation, and ascribe the whole of it to Natural Causes; for assuredly more emphatical Expressions are used to design the New, than were adhibited concerning the old.

Ground 2. The rooted Contrariety, and ingrained Enmity of all that is in Corrupt Nature, unto that blessed Product of a new Creating, Regenerating, and further sanctifying Change do clearly evince a supernatural, special, and efficacious Work of Grace and Power in effectuating it. Matters are worse stated with us, than if we were a meer nothing

thing as to these things, seeing all that is in us, is intirely contrary, yea and contradictory unto that which the Lord requires, and is pleased to work by a converting Change, both in the Entrance and Progress thereof. Compare fairly and impartially the one and other, and the Lord's work, as aforesaid, will be manifest in our Natural Estate; *We are darkned in the understanding, yea darkness its self to shew how great that Darkness is, Eph. 4. 18. and 5. 8. Isa. 25. 7. 2 Cor. 3. 18.* But by Conversion, and still more in the Progress of Sanctification, *Our eyes are opened, the vail removed, and we made light in the Lord, Luk. 4. 18. 2 Cor. 3. 16, 17, 18. Eph. 5. 8.* As Children of the first Adam we are alienated from the life of God, and enemies in our minds by wicked works, yea Enmity its self to hold forth the greatness of that Enmity, *Eph. 2. 12. and 4. 18. Col. 1. 21. Rom. 8. 7. 1 Cor. 2. 14.* and therefore justly designed by the Fiercest and most Cruel, untamed, poisonous and ravening Creatures, as Wolves, Leopards, Boars, Asps, and Cockatrices. But by the Ground-work of Conversion, and more in the Ad-

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vance, this Venome is drain'd out, and we, being transformed by the renewing of our Minds, are made to prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God; *The wolfe is made to dwell with the Lamb, the Leopard to ly down with the Kid, the suckling Child to play on the hole of the Asp, and the weaned Child to put his hand on the Cockatrice Den,* Isa. 11. 6, 7, 8, &c. Rom. 12. 2. Ps. 119. 97. &c. p. t. Rom. 7. 22. Ps. 19. 7, 8, 9. and Rom. 7. 22. And unto all this we may add the greatest efforts of Evil Spirits, by themselves and their Instruments, all set on work to hinder the fore-mentioned Change by the utmost of Force, and Cunning, which possibly they can reach, as also to push us foreward in self destroying Courses: *For Satan goeth about always as a roaring Lyon seeking whom he may devour, and we wrestle against more formidable Adversaries then Flesh and Blood, even Principalities and Powers, &c.* which push us forward in self destroying Courses, 1 Pet. 5. 8. Eph. 6. 11, 12. Hos. 13. 9. Now from all these, and more the like Considerations, it will be manifest (seeing there is nothing in us to procure and further,

further, but every thing that is ours is adapted and set to hinder the foresaid blessed Change,) that it must needs be wrought in a most powerful and efficacious manner, and such as effectually overcometh our Enemies within and without, who struggle to the last against it, both in the Ground-work, and in every bit of the Progress. Hence, both the Foundation, and every Stone of the Building, must be the Product of special Grace and Power, if any thing ever was, is, or can be the Effect thereof.

EXERCISE, V.

Ground 3. **A**N effectual Work of the Spirit of the Lord by the Word, in this Matter, will further appear, if we consider that the Lord is pleased ordinarily to manifest himself to the Exercised Person in such Circumstances, and in such a manner as clearly detecteth the Source, and discovereth the

Hand of the Lord working, and managing the whole in a way of special Mercy set home by Omnipotent Power. Consider these few particulars for setting this in a clearer Light. 1. The Lord interpoleteth by manifesting himself, when the poor tossed Creature is at the lowest Ebb of extreme Distress. The sweet and still Voice ordinarily succeedeth Storms and Earthquakes: This is evident, chiefly at first Conversion, as in the Example of these who were pricked in their Hearts, *Act. 2. 37.* and of the Jailour, *Act. 16. 27.* As also in the ordinary Course and Succession of Soul Exercise. *Inlighten mine eyes,* says the Psalmist, *lest I sleep the sleep of Death,* *Pf. 13. 6.* see *Pf. 18. 4, 5, 6.* and *38. 1, 2, 3, & 40, 1, 2, 3, &c. 2.* Temptations, with the Concurrence of an Evil Heart of Unbelief, and other Corruptions do ordinarily reach a very considerable height before any new decisive stroke. The Storm is ordinarily great, and no Safety appeareth, when yet the Lord commandeth a Calm, and graciously delivereth from that imminent Danger. *Hath he forgotten to be gracious* (saith the Psalmist) *Hath he in anger shut up his*
tender

tender Mercies, Ps. 77. 7, 8, 9. and 73. 12. 13. 14. hereupon, 3. The poor tossed Creature's Expectations are often sunk, and his Hope near expired, when Sovereign Mercy interposeth and commandeth Deliverance, Is. 59. 16. *And he saw that there was no man, and wondered there was no intercessor: therefore his Arm brought Salvation unto him.* And 51. 16. *I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth, for the Spirit should fail before me, and the Souls which I have made,* Ps. 44. 4. From which it is manifest, 1. That to ascribe such Issues to Natural Causes, were such a gross, palpable, and wicked Contradicting both the plain Word, and the whole Series of exercised Souls their Experience, according to it, and so cross even to common Sense, that I know not how to express the Absurdity. 2. That the course of Divine Providence is so wisely and mercifully ordered in the whole Conduct, that no Countenance is given unto our Sacrificing unto our own Net, to which our proud and perverse Natures do strongly incline us. But here no room is left for boasting.

Ground 4. The same Truth appeareth also from the quick Progress, when Sovereign Mercy giveth the deciding Stroke in the Extremity, after that Hope deferred had sickened the Heart, perhaps for a considerable while before, *Pf.* 40. 1, 2, 3. and 18. 6, 7. and 116. 3, 4, 5, &c. Then it is, that the Lord commandeth Deliverances, which are brought to pass by a sort of creating Work; And the exercised Soul is even astonished to find the great Change, which is wrought in a Moment, when a Word set home by the Spirit, stilleth the most furious Storms of Unbelief, with other Corruptions and Temptations, all working together, and like to break the shattered Vessel into a Thousand Pieces. Yet, in the Mount of the Lord it is seen, and the Poor tossed and racked Creature is set in Joint again, even in a Moment; The Snare is broken and he Delivered, while the greatest Subtilties of Temptations are, with a surprizing Evidence of Light and Power detected and defeated. Thus the Battel, for that time is gain'd, the Field cleared, and the Soul enriched by a large share of Spoil, *Pf.* 119. 162. *I rejoiced at*
thy

thy word as one that findeth great spoil, Ps. 68. 9, 10, 11, 12. And tho' this end not the War, but many a Battel ensue; yet the succeeding Conflicts are made the easier, and the Hand of the Lord by a special and supernatural Work appeareth in all this, with the greater and more incontrollable Evidence.

Asperſion 2. The work of the Spirit in exerciſed Souls, is by divers (and ſome of theſe the more Learned) miſrepreſented, and the Perſons taxed as ſwayed by Melancholy Fancies and Notions, ſometimes heavy, at other times more pleaſant.

In Answer to this, I deny not that a Mixture of Natural Melancholy may overcloud the exerciſed Soul; eſpecially when the Lord hideth his Face, and the Temperament inclineth that way: But as Diſorders of that ſort are the afflicting Reſults of Corruption on our part, and Evil Spirits their taking all poſſible Advantages from what they find of that ſort within us, for Darkning a work of Grace, and hindering the progreſs thereof, under the ſweet Breathing of the Word and Spirit of God; So they are far from affording the leaſt Ground to
question

question an efficacious Work of the Spirit upon the Heart in sound Exercise : And on the contrary, a special work of Grace is so much the more to be respected, as what these subtile and cruel Enemies so vigorously oppose in the wrestling Believer, by that and all other possible Divices.

But besides what was mentioned on the preceeding Heads, which, with equal Force taketh off this Aspersions, as proving a supernatural Work, It may be further evinced, that saving Manifestations are of such a kind, and set home in such a Measure and Manner, as fully demonstrateth them to be no Products of Imagination. Ponder for this the following Grounds.

Ground 1. The things manifested are so High and Excellent, that without such Instruction as *Flesh and Blood* cannot bestow, it were impossible to have any one right Thought about them, *Math. 16. 17.* And even the Gracious Soul, tho' in a state of Light, yet is under an utter Impossibility of reviving the Impression and Memory of these Lessons without renewed Influences of Light and

and Life from above. *The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, they are foolishness unto him, 1 Cor. 2. 14.* These things are spiritually discerned, that is, by a spiritual Capacity which we had not before, and the continuance of that special and efficacious Instruction, by which the Eyes were opened at first, and otherways they cannot be understood. *He hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true, 1 Joh. 5. 20.* The Gospel remaineth hid, until God, who commanded Light to shine out of Darkness, shine in the Heart. The Creation of this Light, and nothing less, doth give it a Being. Sometimes ye were Darkness, &c. *Eph. 5. 8.* Hence, sooner might the force of Imagination raise our Bodys to the starry Firmament, than reach the great things of God, which he manifesteth to his own, and not to the World.

Ground 2. The Gospel is wholly My-
sterious, the Wisdom of God in a My-
stery. These things exceed all possible
Contrivance of Creatures, and could
never have been known, even by Sera-
phims, save by Revelation (*Eph. 3. 10.*

To the intent that now unto principalities and Powers in heavenly places, might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God, 1 Pet. 1. 12. Unto whom it was revealed that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you, by them that have preached the Gospel unto you, with the holy Ghost sent down from heaven, which things the Angels desire to look unto.) and far less do they bear any Proportion with our corrupt and ruined Faculties in our fallen Estate, and therefore could never have entred into our Thoughts, save by that Illumination and effectual Instruction, of which before. What could Men, or even Angels have otherways known, of the adorable Ground-work, in an Eternal Compact betwixt the Father and the Son, together with the Blessed Execution, both as to purchase and the Efficacious Conveyance of that purchased Salvation. Hence, no shadow is left for such impudent Blasphemies of ascribing to Imagination, a Work more Glorious than the Creation of Heaven and Earth, 1 Cor. 2. 9. *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man the things*
which

which God hath prepared for them that love him, Rom. 16. 25. Here we have revealed that Mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest by the scriptures of the Prophets, &c. see also Joh. 14. 21, 22. 2 Cor. 5. 19. Eph. 3. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 12.

Ground 3. I might further refute this vile Asperſion from the vehement Stream of corrupt Nature's contrary ſtrivings, together with the ſtrong Current of Temptations of all kinds, and all joining iſſue againſt the Entrance and Progreſs of ſaving Light, which would allow large Matter for this Effect ; For it is an aſſured Truth in Spirituals, that the putting off the Works of Darkneſs will neceſſarily engage the Believer into a croud of Difficulties, which will make the having and uſing the Armour of Light to be indiſpenſibly needful, Rom. 13. 12. Aſſuredly Divine Light is, in ſo far, from being the Product of Imagination, that the things of God when carried in by his Mighty Power upon the renewed Soul, yet are Difficultly received, through the contrary ſtruggling of an Evil Heart of Unbelief: And tho' they

they be exceedingly sweet to the new Creature, yet the Impression is quickly darkned through Unbelief's making head against it, untill renewed Influences from Heaven batter down that Enemy. Many instances of this might be adduced, and the Experience of every exercised Soul verifieth the thing. Consider amongst others, that of the Disciples of our Lord Jesus, who were so very hardly brought to understand and receive a little of the Sufferings of their Lord, and the purchase of Redemption by him, and quickly did fall off, and bend towards their prejudicate Mistakes. Hence *Peter*, after the warning which the Lord gave him, and the other Disciples concerning his approaching Sufferings, did notwithstanding take it upon him to Rebuke our Lord, saying, *Be it far from thee Lord, this shall not be unto thee*, Mat. 16. 22. See also 20. 18, 19, 20, 21. Joh. 14. throughout much of that Chapter. Yea, some things they understood not till he was Glorified, *Joh. 12. 16*. And if it was thus with them under the more immediate Instruction of Christ, how much more foolish and slow of Heart are

are we to believe, where then shall place be found for Imagination?

Ground 4. It is manifest in its self, and incontestable Experience plainly confirmeth, that our Lusts, and especially that great Dagon of Pride giveth the Life, Strength, and Nourishment to our Imaginations, which also have, for their Object, such things as are agreeable to these Lusts, and which our corrupt and haughty Minds do cordially imbrace, or are at best proportioned to them. Hence, in the Progress these Fancies are the Effects of a strong and settled bending inwards, while we spin them, as it were, out of our own Bowels. But all is contrary in the Spirit's Work, and it is the Life of the exercised Soul, under the Influences of Heaven, to go out of Self as to Principle, Ends, Motives, Means, and every thing, that he may live only by Faith. *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God,* &c. Gal. 2. 20. *Not that we are sufficient of our selves to think any thing as of our selves: but our sufficiency is of God.* 2 Cor. 3. 5. See Job. 15. 5. Neither doth he, nor can he

he Build, save upon the Ruines of Self.
If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, &c. Mat. 16. 24. And, in so far as
 Self insinuateth and interposeth, nothing
 can prosper with him. When he saith
 in his Heart, My Mountain stands strong,
 and would secretly applaud himself there-
 in, a sudden Change followeth, and he
 is troubled upon the Lord's hiding of his
 Face. *Nevertheless the foundation of the*
Lord standeth sure, Ps. 30. 7. Prov. 3. 5.
 Here's a Path, which the vulture's Eye
 hath not seen, and whatsoever these
 bold Calumniators pretend, or how-
 soever they may be accounted by
 such as are Strangers to that teaching,
which flesh and blood cannot bestow ; yet the
 exercised Soul, hath no Ground to enter-
 tain the least of Hesitation about that
 which the Lord hath taught and made
 him to see and feel, because of Dust raised
 against these things by them, who are
 accounted Wise and Learned. Our
 Lord Jesus hath plainly taught us that
These things are hid from the wise and prudent,
tho' graciously revealed to Babes. The na-
 tural man receiveth not the things of the spi-
 rit of God ; they are foolishness unto him nei-
 ther

ther can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

EXERCISE VI.

THERE is one Asperſion more referable to this Head, which I muſt take off ſhortly (more will fall in afterwards.) And it is this,

Asperſion 3. Such as are truly exerciſed to Godlineſs, and acquainted with Divine Manifeſtations, are charged with *Enthuſiaſm*, and other ſelf-elevating Deluſions which accompany it; But becauſe this cometh cloſly home to the chief purpoſe deſigned in theſe Exerciſes, I ſhall introduce the Answer by ſome Remarks upon a Paſſage of Scripture, which we may compare with the Text. *I/a.*

59. 21. *As for me, this is my covenant with them, ſaith the Lord, my ſpirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, ſhall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy ſeed, nor out of the mouth*

mouth of thy seeds seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.

We have in the preceeding Verse, a clear Promise of the Redeemer, and the Glory of his Manifestation. In this we have a short summary of the Blessings which he was to purchase and convey. We may take Notice of three things in it.

1. The general proposal of his Covenant with his chosen in these words, *As for me, &c.*

2. We have a more particular Account of the promised Blessings of this Covenant in a comprehensive summ, *My spirit that is upon thee, and my word, &c.*

3. We have the Confirmation of the whole, by a redoubled Testimony (*saith the Lord*) a word to each of these, as our purpose requireth, not designing to dip further into any Explication.

1. For the first by Covenant, I chiefly understand the pleasant System of Gospel Promises, particularly of such Blessings as accompany Salvation, which are the Matter of Christs purchase, according to the Eternal Counsel, and dispensed in such a way as procureth the sweet Assent,
and

and Consent of the whole Man, which, with respect to the different Oeconomies under the Old and New Testament is designed plurally, *Eph. 2. 12. Covenants of promise.* And as to these Promises, there's a fixed order of Accomplishment set down in the Word, in which, and in none other, we are to expect the promised Blessings. Namely, Humiliation goeth before Faith, and Justification preceedeth Sanctification. Nothing is here intended, in the least, intrenching upon the strict and indispensable Obligation of the Law, which is cordially acknowledged to be full and untouched, in this agreeing with the Stream of our soundest and strictest Protestant Divines. I seclude not the Precepts from the Covenant, but do take them in suitably to its Nature and Tenor: This is the plain Scriptural account of the Gospel Covenant, and our Text is of the same Tenor, compare with it *Jer. 31. 33, 34. This shall be the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after these days (saith the Lord) I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, &c.*

See also, *Jer.* 24. 7. & 30. 22. *Heb.* 8. 10, 11, 12. &c.

As for the 2^d. I shall not enter upon it further, than 1. To shew unto whom this summ of promised Blessings is bequeath'd, and shall rather Unite than Oppose the several Sentiments of Interpreters about it.

1. Then it may be understood, as being apply'd to the Faithful Teachers of the Church, whether Ordinary or Extraordinary, holding forth that he who hath put his Stamp upon them, Commissionated them unto, and enter'd them upon his Work, will not leave them in it, but continue to give his Messages to them, and guide them by his Spirit and his Word, in the Discharge of what belongeth to their Office, according to the Promise, *Mat.* 28. 20. *And lo I am with you always, even to the end of the world.* See *Eph.* 4. 11. 12, 13, &c.

2. We may understand the Church invisible, and all the Members thereof, to the End of the World, to whom it is promis'd, that they shall enjoy as their special Treasure, that presence and guiding of the Spirit by the Word, which shall

shall at length land them in Glory, *Is. 38. 20. 21.* And tho' the Lord giveth you the bread ----- yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a Corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy Teachers. And thine ears shall hear a voice behind thee, saying, this is the way walk ye in it, when you turn to the right hand, and when you turn to the left, And *54. 13.* All thy Children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy Children. See also *Jer. 31. 34. Job. 14. 16, 17.*

3. There are who understand the Promise as given by the Father unto the Son, Our Lord Jesus, to be by him made forthcoming to every one of his Seed. As *Isa. 53. 10.* When thou shalt make his Soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. So that these words (*My spirit that is upon thee, &c.*) are to be understood of the Messiah, and the following (*Out of the mouth of thy seed, &c.*) are to be applied to Believers, like precious Oyle upon the Head of our great high Priest, running down upon all the Members of his Mystical Body: And certainly the Promises are

made to *Abraham's* Seed, by way of Eminency, which is Christ, *Gal. 3. 16.*

4. Some also think that it may be extended to the People of the Jews, after their Conversion, signifying that they shall then cleave unto the Lord, without Apostatizing again: These, and more such things may be apply'd, which are not opposite, but may well be brought together as parts of the same Sense.

In the 2^d place, I shall offer a word anent the thing promised, which may be reduced to these heads. 1. Evidence from the Word, as to all the Concerns of Salvation, *a voice behind us* (the Voice of the Lord in the Word) *saying, this is the way walk ye in it.* 2. Influences of the Spirit opening the Heart, to receive that which is held forth in the Word; Thus it pleased the Lord to open the Heart of *Lydia, Acts 16. 14.* In this manner he bringeth his Children into the ways which are pointed out in his Word; He establisheth them, and carrieth them forward in the same. 3. Preservation from Delusions, particularly the damnable Extremes of separating the Word from the Spirit, or the Spirit from the Word,
and

and whatsoever else may stand in the way of our Salvation. 4. His bringing back his Children from all their strayings, and settling them better in the way of Holiness, under the sure and sweet Conduct of his Word and Spirit, which shall not leave them until they have entred into *Emanuel's Land*, a Sphere so high, that this kind of guiding can have no more place in it. *Therefore behold I will hedge up thy ways with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths. And she shall follow after her lovers, but shall not overtake them, and she shall seek them, but shall not find them: Then shall she say, I will go and return to my first Husband, for then was it better with me than now,* Hof. 2. 6, 7.

For the 3^d. part of the Text, *viz.* The Confirmation in the Expression (*saieth the Lord*) redoubled, it representeth to us, 1. Our Backwardness from receiving this great truth, and Inclinations to Extremes on either hand, which are so strong, that we need a redoubled Watchword. 2. The Certainty and great weight of the thing promised, as being the Foundation and Substance of the other Promises.

So much from this Text to lay a Foundation for taking off the Aspersions, the Falseness and Wickedness whereof may appear in these following particulars.

Part 1. Forasmuch as the Promise of this Text secureth the Lord's Children, as to the being kept within bounds, and preserv'd from the forementioned Extremes, both as to their State, and more in their way. The Charge of being *Enthusiasts*, is altogether inconsistent with their being Gracious, but if only Inclinations to somewhat of that kind (when under Confusion as to their Spiritual State, and the Subtilties of Temptation covering these Delusions with an alluring Vail) be understood, As this is no bottom for the Challenge, so he who hath taught them to pray, *Lead us not into Temptation*, doth, and will preserve them from falling into this Pit.

Part 2. This Charge is upon the Matter the same with that which was Blasphemously given against the Lord Jesus, as if he had colluded with Satan, *When the Pharisees heard it, they said, this fellow doth not cast out Devils but by Bel-*

zebub

Satan the Prince of the Devils, Mat. 12. 24. Yet he came to destroy the Works of the Devil, 1 Joh. 3. 8. Assuredly an *Enthusiastical* Spirit is not the Spirit of God, it must then be an Evil Spirit, or our own Spirit's deceiving us, by the Influence and Subtility of Devils.

Part. 3. The Frame and Stamp of an exercised Soul, is wholly contrary to that of *Enthusiastical* Pretenders, and chiefly in the following particulars. 1. It is Christ-like in deep Humility, *Learn of me for I am meek and lowly of heart*, Mat. 11. 29. *Unto me who am less than the least of all Saints is this Grace given*, &c. Eph. 3. 8. See Ps. 73. 22. Prov. 30. 23. So that instead of pretending highly (as *Enthusiasts* do) it is much for him to be brought to some Acknowledgment of what the Lord hath truly wrought in him; and were it not by a special Work of the Lord's Spirit, he would not be perswaded to it. *We have received not the Spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given us of God*, 1 Cor. 2. 12. *Say unto my Soul I am thy Salvation*, Ps. 35. 3. *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith our*

our God, Is. 40. 1. All shewing that right quieting, strengthening, and comforting the exercised and humbled Soul is a Work, unto which Omnipotency put forth in a way of special Mercy is necessarily required. 2. Their Disposition is ordinarily Jealous, under much Holy Fear, and inclining to an Extreme in it, which yet is not to be Justified, and is hardly remov'd by the surmounting Evidence of Manifestation: How often doth the Lord Jesus inculcat this sweet Command upon his Disciples, *Fear not, O ye of little faith, why did ye Doubt?* &c. And truly there is need for all this. Nothing then is found here like unto the daring Presumption and Confidence, or rather Obstinacy of *Enthusiasts*, who stiffly maintain, and impudently assert their foolish and Self-exalting Fancies; whereof yet they can give no satisfying Grounds, and decline any proper, full, and suitable Inquiry into them. 3. The rightly exercised Soul is of a Mould of Spirit, full of much tender regard to the written Word. Often is his Heart drawn forth to put up this necessary Petition, *viz. Teach me thy Statutes*, and that under an afflicting and

and humbling Sense of much Darkneſs and Brutishneſs, and therefore he dare admit of nothing that offereth the leaſt of Violence unto it, but keepeth cloſe to its plain meaning, with a ſweet and awful Reſpect. Upon the contrary, what low Account *Enthuſiaſts* make of the Word, and to what high things, even above it, they pretend, can be unknown to none, who know any thing of their Principles and Ways.

Upon the whole, if it be conſidered, that ſuch as fear the Lord, are afraid of nothing more; and, in his ſtrength, Watch againſt nothing with more Circumſpection, than theſe Deluſions, and yet are charg'd with them, as the like Imputation was faſtned upon their Lord and Maſter, *Mat. 12. 31, 32. Mark. 3. 28, 29, 30.* The Aſperſion muſt flow either from groſs Ignorance, or inveterat Malice; and if from the latter, it goeth far.

EXERCISE VII.

Use, Information.

IN the next place, I shall offer my Thoughts by way of Information, concerning the Evil and Danger of Extra-scriptural Impressions, whether of Sorrows or Joys conveyed by Dreams, Visions, or Voices, and confirmed by pretended Lights, and other such Evidences, reputed to have somewhat more than ordinary in them.

As a Foundation to this, I shall a little Comment upon a Passage of Scripture, 2 Cor. 11. 3. *But I fear, lest by any means, as the Serpent deceived Eve through his Subtility, so your minds shall be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ Jesus.* A word from this, only in so far as may give Light to the purpose in hand. In the preceeding Verse, the Apostle expresseth his fervent Love towards this Church, having, through Grace, espous'd them,

them, in Profession, and many of them in Reality to Christ, and now having nothing higher in his Eye, than to present them as a Chast Virgin to him, he is Solicitous, least, by the Subtility and powerful Influence of evil Spirits upon their Corruptions, this Blessed Design should in some Measure miscarry. This he expresseth in the 3d. Verse, wherein we have to observe these three things. 1. The thing which he feared, *viz. The Corruption of their minds from the simplicity that is in Christ.* 2. The way how he suspected that this might be brought to pass (*as the Serpent beguiled Eve through his Subtility.*) 3. His Solitude about it in the Expression (*I fear*) in the beginning of the Verse.

1. For the *First*, we are to consider, 1. *The Simplicity that is in Christ*, by it I understand the pure unmixt and uncorrupted Doctrine concerning Christ, which he had Taught, and they had received from him, and was Adulterated, partly by the Mixture of Humane Wisdom and vain Philosophy, *Col. 2. 8. 23.* partly by the mingling of the Law of *Moses* with the Gospel, *Gal. 5. 1, 2.* lest by declining

clining thus gradually, they should at length totally Revolt from Christ. 2. I understand likewise the Purity and Uprightness of Faith in Christ, and Sincerity of Obedience to him, forasmuch as Errors in Doctrine have still a bad Influence upon Practice. *The works of the flesh Adultery, Fornication, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Heresies are of a near Alliance to one another,* Gal. 5. 19. Next, it is to be noticed, That he mentioneth the *Mind*, by which I understand, not only the Understanding, but also the Will and Affections as influenced by it, and swaying the whole Man.

For the *Second* part of the Text, there is in it a manifest Allusion to the Temptation of our first Parents, and Satan's Work, *Gen. 3. 1, 2, 3, &c.* who seduced them and us. 1. By proposing something, as alluring to the outward Senses, tho' forbidden by the Lord.

2^{dly}. (Which I think is more especially intended) by representing somewhat under the Notion of Wisdom, which notwithstanding, was expressly contrary to the Lord's revealed Will. Both these ordinarily concur, and recommend mutually

tually each other; agreeable to this were the Perversions of the Gospel, by false Apostles, deceitful Workers transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ, and expressing their Poisonous Doctrine *with enticing words of Mans Wisdom*, Verse 13. and 1 Cor. 2. 4.

For the *Third* part of the Text (*I fear*) the Expression holdeth forth, 1. The fitness of such a Net to catch the unwary People, who readily might be induc'd to give way unto whatsoever was covered with the beautiful Vail of Wisdom and Spirituality, tho' truly destructive. 2. His Holy Jealousy expressed in the preceding words (*Over you*) lest this should befall, flowing from his fervent Love towards them. 3. The words do tacitly excite themselves to Fear, what the Apostle was so much afraid, might befall them: Holy Fear of Delusion, being, through the Lord's Blessing, an effectual Preservative against it.

Thus we see, that things having a shew of Wisdom and Spirituality, may readily deceive. Now, what Judgment to pass upon these Visions, Dreams, &c. (not to enter upon any other purpose from

from the Text) I shall endeavour to unfold in these following Heads.

And to wave any Disquisition of what might have been in times of extraordinary Darknes, when the written Word was suppress'd, and Access to it was not only full of Difficulty and Danger, but to many impossible, which is not our Case. Nor to question the Godliness of some, who may be tainted with a respect too great to such Apocriphal Deceits, when there are other pregnant Evidences of their Godliness, Neither to Limit the Holy One of *Israel*, any way, I offer the following Positions as to the Thing.

Position 1. They are no Foundation upon which Faith can rest, for it can settle on no other Divine Testimony, but what we have recorded in the Word (the Canon being now compleated) or otherwise the Two-leav'd-gates were set open to all kind of Delusions in Judgment and Practice, which, as they have not wanted abundant Grounds of this kind, so they have been introduc'd, maintain'd, and cherish'd in this manner, neither can they be refuted, or their Progress stop'd, but by having recourse to the Law and
Testi-

Testimony, upon which alone we may settle: And thus the Concurrence of the Spirit with the Word, carrieth on the Lord's Work in the Soul: This is the King's high Way, and we know no other, *Jf. 8. 21. & 59, 21. 2 Pet. 1. 19.*

Posi. 2. One, and I judge the chief Root of Respect to these Conceits, is want of solid Scriptural-light in the first strokes of Conviction, *Joh. 16. 8, 9. Acts 2. 37.* It is observable, that the Original Word which we have rendered *Reprove*, implyeth (among other things) *a filling of the Soul with Evidence, and binding it with the Strength of clear Demonstrations*, which is also imported by *Sealing the Instruction*, *Job. 33. 16.* That is the Lord's setting it home by his Authority, and as it were, appending his Seal to it. Now, when once Light is convey'd into the Soul this way, the Person is taught thereby not to admit of Comfort, or any other Impression in the Concerns of Salvation, but upon the same Evidence: And assuredly (if not left to himself) he will do so, not daring to build upon an unsure Foundation in Matters of an Eternal Con-

Concern, whereof the Evidence can never be too great.

Posi. 3. The deluded Person, in this Case, will be found exceeding vehement, and of great Advances in his Motions, for that corrupt Nature favoureth, and Devils do not resist, but rather further the building upon such a Foundation, which will equally support the vilest of all Abominations in Judgment and Practice. Hence, this Land-flood floweth impetuously for a time, and much like the Seed in stony Ground, *Mat. 13. 20, 21.* springeth quickly up, not being deeply plough'd by a convincing wounding and humbling Work; and the promoters and receivers of such Delusions, are Persons either Ignorant of the plain and substantial Truths of Religion, Law, and Gospel, &c. Or if indu'd with some Notions about these; They are Strangers to a soundly convincing, wounding, and humbling Work upon the Heart: and are either totally wanting, or at best but weak, as to a necessary Establishment, upon the alone Foundation by saving Faith, and to many such the Passage may on too good Ground be apply'd.

viz. He feedeth of ashes : a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his Soul, nor say, is there not a lie in my right hand, *If. 44. 20.*

Posl. 4. As he runeth fast, so he will run himself a ground, and these painted Appearances will issue, Either 1. Into gross Heresies, by giving heed to seducing Spirits, *1 Tim. 4. 1, 2. Mat. 24. 24.* Or, 2. Into gross Abominations of Practise, For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again intangled therein ; the latter end is worse with them than the beginning, &c. *2 Pet. 2. 20, 21.* 3. A deep or deadly Sleep of Security with the foolish Virgins. Or, 4. Desperate views that the Lamps are out, *Mat. 25. 8. &c.* and often these concur : So dangerous it is, to recede from the paved way. And of all this, these dregs of Time wherein our Lot is order'd, have afforded many an afflicting instance.

EXERCISE, VIII.

Use 3. Conviction.

WE may for Conviction infer from this, That the Evil and Danger of false Peace is exceeding great, as wanting Evidence from the Word, and flowing from the delusive Perswasions of a change of State; But for as much as this Point is of great weight, I shall lay down as a Foundation to it, a passage of Scripture which we have.

Isa. 50. 11.

Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass your selves with sparks, walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall ly down in sorrow.

In the preceeding Verse (not to Trace the Connection further) the Prophet had comforted the Lord's Children under their Darkness, teaching them to trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon their
God

God, being at rest in the Assurance, that they who *trust in his Mercy*, shall *rejoice in his Salvation*. These are the Persons, who have indeed a Right to Comfort, but are exceeding averse from receiving of it.

In this Verse he thundereth the Wicked, who run to a contrary extreme, comforting themselves with great Confidence, without any sufficient Ground : Wherein we have (besides the Note of Attention, discovering both the weight of the purpose, and our unwillingness to be thrust off from our false Grounds by receiving it) these three things observable.

1. The Persons whom he threatneth describ'd, these are they *that kindle a fire, and compass themselves about with sparks*.

2. We have an account of their way, *They walk in the light of their fire, and in the sparks that they have kindled*.

3. The Prophet holds forth to us the sad issue of it, in these words, *They shall ly down in sorrow*.

1. For the first, I understand as contain'd in the Description.

1. A false Light, from the Delusions of Satan, and Deceits of our Hearts, perswading us, That *we shall have peace tho' we walk in the imaginations of them*, Deut. 29. 19. &c. This Light is truly Darknes, tho' these false Grounds may have some Appearance for recommending themselves to such as hate the Light, John 3. 19.

2. False Consolation flowing from the fore-mentioned Delusions, while the Soul would warm and refresh its self with these sparks: But nothing of this is from the Lord, the Fire and Sparks are wholly ours.

For the 2d. Part of the Text, the manner of Expression representeth to us,

1. The great propensity of our corrupt Nature, to entertain and solace our selves in our own Delusions, as if it had been said, *Ye will walk in the light of them*, being your Fire, ye are bent upon this: So Eccles. 11. 9. where the young Man is, as it were, required to *rejoice in his youth, and to let his heart cheer him in the days of his youth, and to walk in the ways of his heart*. The meaning is, not that he may lawfully do these things, which are directly contrary

trary to the Lord's revealed Will; but they denote a peremptory Forwardness of perverse Nature, so violent, that he will give these Lusts their swing, whatsoever it cost him.

2. The great Wickedness and Madness of such a Course, as *walking in the light of our fire*, &c. and therefore making God a Liar, by laying Stress upon our own Fancies, and the Deceits of Satan, in a Contradiction to the whole word.

3. The strong tendency of our Hearts, to persist in these ways to the End; which also we will do, if Mercy prevent not.

For the 3^d. part, some understand by the Expression (*My hand*) the Hand of the Prophet, as bearing the Lord's Message; So *the burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachie*, is in the Original, by the Hand of *Malachie*, Mal. 11. But tho' the Sense cometh to one, yet this seemeth to be somewhat constrain'd; I take it to be the Lord's Hand more immediatly, signifying and representing thus The heaviness and certainty of the Judgment. And as to the last Words (*Ye shall ly down in sorrow*) they signify not only

1. The dreadfulnes of the Judgment, by a figurative Expression, wherein less is said, but a great deal more intended, *Exod. 20. 7.* But,

2. Its Irredeemableness, when it cometh to a lying down in the Grave under these Delusions, forasmuch as the Tree lyeth where it falleth. And,

3. The Eternity of this Sorrow, there being no returning.

This premis'd, I shall first offer some Evidences of False Peace. 2. Open its Rise. 3. Shew its Danger. 4. Give a word of Advice for escaping it. As to the first, take the following Evidences.

1. The Peace is False, which procureth a shunning of the Light, and declining a just and fair Trial; whereas the more strict and accurate the Search be, it will the more refresh the believing Soul, whose Peace is of the right Stamp, but still providing that the rule of the Word be observed. *This is the Condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, &c. Joh. 3. 19. 20. Search me, O God, and know my heart, &c. Ps. 139. 23: 24. Ps. 26. 1, 2, 3.*

2. That Peace is False, which can consist

sist with the maintainance of any known Sin: The sparing of a *right Hand or Eye* will assuredly deprive us of Salvation, *Mat. 5. 29. 30. and 18. 8. Mark 9. 47.* This is done by stretching our Art, to cover real Evil, with the specious Appearance of Good: Thus, as it were, bribing the Conscience, while, in the meantime, the necessary Discoveries which the Light would make, are under some one or other pretext, carefully evited. Right and solid Peace, both keepeth the Soul at an irreconcilable Variance with every known Evil, and layeth it also open unto whatsoever further Conviction it may please the Lord to vouchsafe, which also the exercised Soul desireth earnestly. *If I regard iniquity in my heart: the Lord will not hear me, &c. Ps. 66. 18. 19. see Ps. 119. 128.*

3. The Peace which can stand with, and groweth out of a Root of Sloath, is certainly a false Peace; For right and solid Peace is Active and Laborious, and will gradually break that Dagon into pieces; and so much the more that it is further established, and groweth. *I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou*
sh

shall enlarge my heart, Ps. 119. 32. See also *Rom.* 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Phil.* 4. 6, 7, 8.

4. That Peace is false, which is not supported, and cannot be instructed by satisfying Evidence from the Word. Pretences of the Spirit without the Word, are meer and gross Delusion, *Isa.* 8. 21. and 59. 21.

5. That Peace which Devils and Corruptions oppose not with all their Power and Policy, as it pleaseth the Sovereign Lord to lengthen the Chain, is certainly false, being the result of the strong Man's keeping the House. When the strong Man Arm'd, keepeth his Palace, his Goods are at peace, *Luk.* 11. 21. Otherways the Fight is *against principalities and powers*, *Eph.* 6. 11. 12. And the thing is manifest in its self, seeing these lying and murdering Spirits are as much Enemies to our Comfort, as to our Sanctification. Hence it is so very great a Matter to fasten Comfort upon the exercised Soul, that our Lord designeth himself *The Comforter of these who are cast down*. Assuredly true Comfort will never enter upon a disconsolate Mind, without special and efficacious Instruction from the God of Peace,
Isa.

Isa. 40. 1, 2. *2 Cor.* 7. 6. *Rom.* 5. 13. So much for this Head, my Design being rather to discover false Peace, than to enlarge on the True.

2. As for the second, This false Peace deriveth its Rise, from the strong and violent Inclination of soft and easie Nature, to Quietness upon any Terms. As it is with pain in the Body, so yet more in the Soul; We naturally weary of it, and would listen to any Expedient whatsoever, which promiseth present Ease. Hence many do, if not in words, yet practically say to the Seers, *see not; and to the prophets, prophesie not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesie deceits. Get you out of the way, &c.* *Is.* 30 10. 11. *The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears* *2 Tim.* 4. 3. 2. This evil Spirits know, and do therefore lay out themselves, both more immediatly, and by their most exquisite Tools, *viz.* False Teachers, or others of the like Stamp, to devise and offer such Expedients, having adjusted them to the respective Occasions, with all possible Exactness. Thus they
sow

low Pillows under the Arm-holes, and say, *Peace, Peace, when there is no Peace*, Jer. 8. 11. Ezk. 13. 10. 3. The Confusion and Disorder of Mind, which usually attendeth Soul-Troubles, layeth us at greater Advantage for such Snares, as not so fit to discern, and ready to Mistake, by reason of our Intanglements, amidst the horrible Pit and miry Clay, Ps. 40. 1. 2. Hence, 4. Resulteth a woful Precipitancy in receiving offered Comfort too early, and without sufficient Evidence from the Word, set home by the Spirit upon the humbled Mind, unto which (may I say it) an excess of Charity upon the part of some, who truly fear the Lord, giveth too ready Access. A previous and impartial Inquiry is the Lord's way, and still safe. *He that believeth will not make hast*, Is. 28. 16.

3. For the Third, I shall comprehend the Dangers of these Delusions in one Head, and Branch it out a little. And the Head is this,

False Peace greatly strengtheneth Satan's possession, when the evil Spirit returneth unto an house swept and garnished. *Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits*

spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in, and dwell there, and the last state of that man is worse than the first, Luk. 11. 25. 26.

Hence, 1. Such deluded Persons have often Apostatized into the most damnable Errors and Heresies, as Arminianism, Popery, and the Sink of Hellish Abominations, *viz.* Execrable Quakerism; which, and the like have proven the dismal issue of a sort of legal Strictness, after ill Temper'd Exercise: Yea, even Zeal for things materially Right, but not proceeding from saving Faith (yet such as the person valueth himself upon) may degenerate into the vilest Abominations, both in Worship and Way, as appear'd in the Example of *Jehu, 2 Kings 10.* throughout.

2. At best such deluded Persons become so far hardned, that either Convictions never reach them effectually, or if they do, they go very deep; a festered Sore is either never, or difficultly cured, and with much pain, *if they ly not down in sorrow.*

3. Their Disappointments are great, and their awakenings Dreadful, when the Dream is over; It shall be even as *when an hungry man dreameth, and behold he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty.* Or as
when

when a thirsty man dreameth, and behold he drinketh; but he awaketh, and behold he is faint, and his Soul hath appetite, &c. If. 29. 8. 3. The continuance of false Peace, intaileth all the Curses written in the Word, upon such as give way unto, and persist in the Delusion, *Deut.* 29. 19, 20, 21, &c.

As to the Fourth, I shall subjoin for a Close, some words of Advice, 1. Let us intertain still an Holy Fear of Caution (not of Distrust) until the Lord Confirm, and then we may, and ought to be humbly Confident (*I know that my Redeemer liveth, &c.* Job. 19. 25. *For I know in whom I have believed, and am perswaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.* 2 Tim. 1. 12. see Rom. 8. 35. 36.) till such time, a Holy Fear of Delusion is a notable Preservative against it. *Happy is the man that feareth always, Prov.* 28. 14. 2dly. Tho we should Reject and Contemn Temptations, often answered, and yet still impudently Objected; notwithstanding when any thing appearing to be of weight, occurreth, which maketh against us, let it not be slighted, but carried in before the Lord, until

until a clear and satisfying issue be given, and we further confirmed, than if the Temptation had never occurred, *Pj.* 73. and 13. and 77. througout. 3. Let us under the Influences of Grace, always, and in every thing, lay our Hearts open before the Lord, to be tryed by him, not giving way to the Doubts, Fears, and Jealousies of Unbelief: And yet seing, at best, much of Darknes cludgeth our Light, Duty and Interest require, that we should ly open to searck, both for the dispelling of that Darknes, and our further Confirmation in that which the Lord had taught us. *Examin me, O Lord, and prove me, try my reins and my heart,* *ps.* 26.

2. *Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me,* *ps.* 139. 23,

24. A clos and narrow Search is still confirming to the Sincere, howsoever Grievous to the most subtile Hypocrite.

4. When any new Manifestation is given, press in the Lord's strength, to pursue and digest it so far, that the whole Fabrick, from the Foundation, may be strenghtned. After this manner, the converted Person is still further Converted. *Verily* (saith
Our

Our Lord Jesus Christ) I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Which is not to be understood of the first Conversion, or Translation from the Estate of Corrupt Nature, into a Gracious Estate ; but of a further Progress on deep and solid Grounds, and a better Establishment of the work of Grace in their Hearts, from the root and upward. And while he groweth upward, he taketh root downward, and every degree of Growth strengthneth the Root. *The remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah, shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward, Is. 37. 31.*

EXERCISE IX.

*Use
Trial.*

I Proceed now to the chief Use for which these Exercises are design'd, viz. An Use of Trial, wherein I shall labour to cut the Threed betwixt the Manifestations

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festations of the Lord's Spirit, the Dictates of our own Spirits, and the Delusions of evill Spirits: As a Foundation to this, we may compare with the Text the following Passage.

I John 4. 1.

Beloved, believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits, whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

In which Words we may clearly see the Duty, with reference to this purpose, plainly and powerfully enjoined. There are these two things to be noticed in the Text,

1. An important Duty, *Believe not every Spirit.*

2. A comprehensive general Motive, containing divers particulars, *For many false prophets are gone out into the world.*

I shall only speak a word of the first, wherein we have, 1. The Compellation (*Beloved*) in which Earnestness is mingled with much Condescension, Affection in Heart, and Sweetness in Expression.

This is the true and proper Method for conveying Instruction, Conviction, Exhortation or Reproof; For both

both Scripture, Reason and Experience teach, that Conviction cometh too late upon a Mind unnecessarily irritated. Man's Wrath shuteth (shall I call them) every Avenue, and therefore all Measures consistent with Faithfulness, ought to be taken for its Prevention, and (if possible) to conciliate Affection ; For otherways, *The wrath of Man worketh not the Righteousness of God*, Ja. 1. 20. See also Isa. 1. 18. Prov. 2. 1, 2, 3. Rom. 12. 1. 2.

2. We have the Duty proposed Negatively, *Believe not every spirit*. By Spirit we may understand both the Doctrine Revelation, or Inspiration pretended 1 Cor. 12. 10. And also by a Metonymy, the Persons who pretend to the Inspiration, and vent the Doctrine ; with reference to these, we are enjoined in the Text, *Believe not*, &c. Here are presupposed, 1. That false Teachers will pretend fair, as acted by the Spirit of the Lord. *If any man shall say unto you, lo, here is Christ, or there : believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, in so much that (if it were possible) they shall deceive the very Elect*, Mat. 23. 23, 24. Luk. 17. 23. 2dly. That

That their Pretences will be founded on very plausible Grounds, so that they will go near to Deceive the very Elect : Besides the forecited places, add *Mark* 13. 21. 22. *2 Thes.* 2. 8, 9, 10. Yet saith the Lord, *Believe not every Spirit.* That is, 1. Be not Precipitant in receiving them, delay at least, till sufficient Trial, there is great Danger in hast, it may cause Demurr that they pretend so far ; For the Spirit of God teacheth Christ-like Humility. *II. 42. 2.* It is said of our Lord he shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets, *Phil.* 2. 5. 6. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. But made himself of no Reputation, and took upon him the form of a Servant, and was made in the likeness of Men. 2dly. Take nothing on Trust, receive not their Testimony of themselves. *I am come in my Father's Name and ye receive me not : If another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive, Joh.* 5. 43. And they truly come in their own Name, whatsoever they pretend : This for the Negative.

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2dly. Po-

2dly. *Positively* we are injoin'd to try the Spirits: There is a twofold Trial, 1. A Publick and Authoritative, which belongeth to the Judicatories of the Church, of this I speak not.

2dly. There is a private and discretive, which belongeth to private Persons, who are allow'd and injoin'd not to Assent but upon sufficient Evidence of the Lord's Testimony: As the Bereans, *who tho' they received the Word with all readiness of Mind, yet searched the Scriptures daily whether these things were so, Act. 17. 11.* To this Trial are presupposed,

1. An infallible Rule, according to which the Trial is to be made, and therefore neither Man's Wisdom, his Reason nor Authority, but the sure word of Prophecie, *Isa. 8. 19. 20. 2 Pet. 1. 19.*

2. The true and saving Knowledge of that Rule, for he who is Blind cannot judge here. *Whom shall he teach Knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand Doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts, Isa. 28. 9.*

3. A supernatural fitness to discern. *His sheep hear his voice ----- and a stranger they will*

will not follow : for they know not the voice of strangers, Isa. 10. 3. 5. see Heb. 5. 14.

4. The Conduct of the Lord's Spirit guiding from the Word, and an intire Deference unto him for that effect. *And I will pray the father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever. Even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him : but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you, Joh. 14. 16. 17. When the spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth : for he shall not speak of himself : but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he will shew you things to come, Joh. 16. 13.* These things presupposed, the Trial consisteth, 1. In an exact Consideration of the Rule. 2. An impartial Search into the Doctrine to be compared with the Rule. 3. The bringing the one to the other. 4. Seeking to the Lord by Prayer, and using other Means of his appointment for Light. 5. Whatsoever he discovereth, bringing it again to him for renewed Confirmation, till further Evidence come : And in the whole maintaining, 1. A due Sense of the Deceitfulness and desperate wickedness

of our Hearts, *Jer.* 17. 9. And our readiness to be drawn away of our own lusts and inticed, *Ja.* 1. 14. Hence, 2dly. By Faith depending upon the Lord for ordering every step in this important Trial, O Lord, *I know that the way of man is not in himself, &c. Jer.* 10. 23. *The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, &c. Ps.* 51. 23. 3dly. Not hastning but patiently waiting for Light and Truth from the Father and Fountain thereof. *He that believeth shall not make haste, Isa.* 28. 16. To conclude this, I offer the following Rules, that we may escape the splitting upon Rocks on either hand in this weighty Business.

Rule 1. In due Subordination to the Word, the only Rule, let us have regard to the Confessions, and other approved Standards of the Faith of Reformed Churches, particularly our own. Recessions from these are ordinarily the beginnings of, and introductive to further Errors.

Rule 2. Still observing a due Subordination to the Word, let us (as to things under Debate) search into the Judgment and Practices of godly and learned Divines, and such as were more Eminent
for

for Faithfulness in their Day, whether by Communication (if alive) or pondering their Writings, if we have access to know by our selves or others, any thing left on Record by them, as to controverted Points; Especially such as have written in clearer times: And if we must needs in some things, differ from them (which cannot but be uneasy to the humble Soul) it ought to be upon further Light, and satisfying Answers to their Grounds.

Rule 3. With a due regard to the Law and Testimony, Let us carefully notice *the Footsteps of the flock*, Song. 1. 8. and search into what have been the Sentiments and Carriage of the Lord's People in former times; And if we can find somewhat in their Deportment, under the like Trials, conform to what we have mentioned of the cloud of Witnesses in the Word, let this determine the Case: The Path which we chuse, must be a trodden one: unpaved ways are Dangerous.

Rule 4. Whatsoever Ground we may find as to our Motions, with reference to Practice in circumstanced Cases, which ought to be wisely managed: Let us be

ware of establishing Principles without abundant Evidence from the Word, and a due regard to the Footsteps of the Flock in former times, and such whereof the consequences may Condemn these whom the Lord approveth, or be found of any hurtful Influence, with reference to the great Interests of Christ's Kingdom and Gospel, and the faithful Dispensers thereof, tho' under some different Sentiments, while *we know in part and prophesie in part*, 1 Cor. 13. 9. Pure Principles are a great Trust received from our Ancestors, and which we are to Transmit to our Posterity, *a little Leaven leaveneth the whole lump*, 1 Cor. 5. 6. and is exceedingly subversive to Religion, much better were it to wait, not determining rashly in a dark time, *till the day spring from on high visit us*.

Rule 5. Whatsoever we may find cause to Determine as to Judgment or Practice, let Room be still left both to further Discoveries, and the removal of what Mistakes may be intermixed: For tho' the Superstructure may be in some measure good; yet we often mingle *much wood, hay, and stubble* of our own, and raise it upon the Foundation, 1 Cor. 3. 12.

EXER.

EXERCISE, X.

Use of **T**H E Ground being laid
Trial. down, I proceed now
to the Use, and offer the follow-
ing distinguishing Marks.

Mark 1. *The Manifestations of the Spirit by the word imprint and strengthen the lively Faith, and Aw of a Deity, as revealed in the word to the Soul through Christ, according to the tenor of the Gospel Covenant. And Jacob called the name of the place where God spake with him Bethel, Gen. 35. 15. Now I know that the Lord is greater than all Gods, for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly, he was above them, Exod. 18. 11. see Jer. 23: 6. Exod. 34. 6, 7. For understanding this, we may consider the following Positions.*

Position 1. We are all by Nature wholly void of the true Knowledge of God, without God, or (as the Word soundeth in the Original) Athists in the World, Eph: 2: 12: under the power of Darknes and reign of
all

all Sin, *Rom.* 1: 29, 30, 31, and 3: 10: and downward.

Posi. 2. Nothing can truly cure this Heart *Atheism*, but the light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God, in the Face of Jesus Christ, till that shine in upon our Hearts, we remain without God in the World, *Eph.* 2. 12. & 5. 8. 2 *Cor.* 4. 3. 6.

Posi. 3. That Knowledge of God, and assent to the Truths revealed in the word concerning him, which may be the Product of a common Work of the Spirit, never discovereth him in Christ to the loosening of the Heart from all Idols and Endearment of the whole Soul to him. Such a sight of the Pearl and Treasure hid in the Field, by which the Heart is Divorced from other Lords and Lovers is only the Product of special and saving Illumination: Flesh and Blood revealeth not these things, *Mat:* 16: 17: and 13: 44, 45, 46. *Song.* 3: 11.

Posi. 4. The Impressions of God absolutely, and not in Christ, are not of the true God, for no other is revealed to us, but One God in Three Persons, *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, 1 *Joh:* 5: 7: *Mat:* 28: 19: God in Christ reconciling the World

unto

unto himself, 2 Cor: 5: 19: Applying by his Spirit the purchased Redemption. No Man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the Bosome of the Father, he hath declared him, *Joh: 1: 18: see 14: 16, 17.*

Posi. 5. When the Lord taketh the Vail from off the Heart, and manifesteth himself in his Glory through Christ to the Soul, so that it findeth sweet rest in him, *Math: 11. 28, 29. We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,* 2 Cor. 3. 18. &c. I say, when it is so, Devils and Corruptions oppose, and struggle to the utmost for hindering the entrance of, or extinguishing utterly this Light. *We wrestle not against Flesh and Blood, but against Principalities, &c. Eph: 6: 12: see Rom. 13. 12.*

Posi. 6. Under these Conflicts the exercised Soul is sore put to it, *Pf: 13. throughout. The sorrowes of death compassed me, and the pains of hell got hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow, Pf: 116: 3. Save me, O God, for the waters are come in unto my Soul. I sink in deep mire where there is no standing. &c. Pf: 69: 1, 2.* And many times the Believer is made to say, *We have no Might against this*

this great Company that cometh against us, neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee.

Posi. 7. In these Straits the Lord forsaketh not the Work of his own Hands, but maintaineth, and by the Furnace further purifieth; yea, and hightneth the Manifestation. Thus the words of the Lord *are pure words*, and evidenced to be such in the hottest Furnaces, *Pf. 12. 6. & 138.8. & 73.* throughout. Now when thus *in the mount of the Lord it is seen*, Gen: 22. 14. This is manifestly the Work of the Lord's Spirit, contrary to, and crossing all the Designs of Heli, and as much above Nature, as the Creation of a whole World would be. This is the first, and fundamentally distinguishing Character: All centereth here (that I may sum up the Evidence) Namely, 1. Our innate Ignorance of, and perverse Impressions concerning the true God, render us in a Scriptural account, without God in the World. 2. That *Face of the Covering cast upon all People*, is irremovable by all that Creatures can do, and the removal is only the effect of a special Work of Grace and Power from the Lord. Only

his shining in upon the Heart; giveth the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor: 4. 3: 6: 3. The Lord in this, putteth (may I so express it) the Honour upon his own Word, by carrying in, and letting home upon the Heart by his Spirit, the Light which is there held forth, *Iſa.* 59. 21. Hence, 4. It is manifest, that such a Teaching and Establishment must needs be a special Work of Grace, and Product of the Lord's Spirit. Nothing less could effectuate the Thing, seeing the whole *here, is* above Nature, utterly cross to Corrupt Nature, and subversive of the strongest Holds of Satan's Kingdom.

To pass what was hinted above, as to the keeping the middle Path betwixt Extremes of separating the Word from the Spirit, or the Spirit from the Word, which likeways is of considerable Use to this purpose. I offer this second Mark.

Sign 2. The Manifestations of the Spirit do still imprint Christ's Stamp upon the Soul, or make it deeper, and its Luster greater. The soule is thereby sweetned, being meekned and humbled ; And thus the Iron Sinew is broken, and the Will
more

more melted into, and swallowed up in the Lord's Will by them. *Moses* was a Man Eminent, as having enjoy'd Divine Manifestations to a singular degree. The Lord spoke to him Face to Face: And it's observeable, that he was as Eminent for Meekness, *Numb.* 12. 3. As also the Apostle *Paul*, who enjoy'd a very high Degree of Manifestations, was exemplarily Humble. Unto me *who am less than the least of all Saints is this grace given*, &c. *Eph.* 3: 8. See also *Deut.* 34. 10, 11, 12. *1 Tim.* 1: 16: *Isa.* 11: 6: Upon the contrair, Satan's Image is more deeply impressed by his Delusions, as appeareth by the Pride, Presumption, and Malice of *Enthusiastical* Pretenders, compare their high Expressions, and arrogant Pretences of Perfection, &c. with the lowly strain of these who are Beautified with Christ's Image, and sink still more deeply into Gospel Humiliation, while growing Light discovereth more and more an innumerable Multitude of Iniquities together with their hidden Agravations, and the deep Deceits of their Hearts; whose desperate Wickedness maketh them keep a very low Sail, and their Strugglings against

gainst the Lord's Will and Disposal, make them heavily to Lament *a body of Death*, Rom. 7. 24. and exceedingly to long for the bringing down of these strong holds, 2 Cor. 10. 4. I say, compare the one and the other, and the exercised Soul must needs be convinced of Satan's Image on the one hand, while some Lineaments of Christ's Image (howsoever imperfect) appear on the other, 2 Tim: 2. 24: 1 Tim. 3. 6. & 6. 3, 4, 5. Ja. 3. 13. 17. Eph. 3. 8. And thus abundant Evidence for Distinction appeareth, tho' still great wants of that distinguishing Beauty are humbling.

EXERCISE XI.

Sign 3. **T***Rue Manifestations do gradually kill Self.*

For clearing of this, let us take notice, 1. Of the Self that is killed by them. 2. How they kill that Self. 1. They bring down
Self

Self Estimation, for saving Light giveth to the Christian a true account of himself, thus teaching him (while Sovereign and free Love is exalted, and all its Gifts ascribed to it) still to entertain the Sense of his own Wickedness, the humbling impression whereof is always upon the ascendent, as the Lord further manifests himself through Christ. *Wo is me for I am undone because I am a man of unclean lips,* &c. Isa. 6. 5. *By the grace of God I am what I am,* 1 Cor. 15. 10. *Not that we are sufficient of our selves to think any thing as of our selves, but our sufficiency is of God,* 2 Cor. 3. 6.

2. *Self-will*, Seing every degree of saving and special Light doth break the Iron Sinew and Brow of Brasse in a proportioned Measure, and therefore raiseth the Believer to more of a humble Submissive and sweet Compliance with the Lord's Will in every thing without Exception or Reserve.

3. They gradually kill *Self-ease* or Sloath; For as much as the Heart is thereby enlarged to a running in the way of the Lord's Commandments with Freedom and Alacrity, Ps. 119. 32. Neither is it only to the more ordinary Course of Obedience that

the

the Love of Christ constraineth the Believer, 2 Cor: 5. 17. But it likeways engageth him the more pleasantly to *take up his Cross*, and more vigorously to *endure all Hardness*, as a good Souldier of Jesus Christ. Thus in the progress of the warfare, the Believer hath his Heart drawn forth into, and established in the Praises of the Lord, *who teacheth his hands to war and his fingers to fight*, Ps: 144: 1.

For the 2d. Besides what is mentioned, consider further the following Strokes at Self, given by them.

1. Special and saving Manifestations display, according to their Measure, still more and more of the Emptiness of the Creature, even in its prime. *I have seen an end of all perfection* (may the Believer say) And in this manner it is, that the Lord severeth his Heart from his most endeared Idols, by lively Discoveries of the Loathsomness and vanity of them.

2. They discover still more and more of the *Deceits and desperate Wickedness of the Heart*, and thus take us off from the great Wickedness of making Flesh our Arm: And in this manner the Believer is inured, and from time to time more enabled, and de-

determined to go out of Self, and to live by Faith upon infinite fulness. *I live, yet not I, &c. Gal. 2. 20. compare Jer. 17. 9, 10. 2 Cor: 3: 5: Rom: 7: 18: Isa; 6: 5: Phil. 3: 3.*

3. The Spirit's teaching, doth according to its Measure, fill the humbled Soul with the Glory of Christ, and engageth the Heart still more unto the Lord Jesus, as made of God unto us, *Wisdom Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption*; And thus the great Dagon of Self-righteousness falleth to the Ground, which is openly Rampant, and whereof the Ruins are Dreadful amongst *Enthusiasts* and false Pretenders. *We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags, and we do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away, Isa. 64: 6. I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, Phil. 3: 8.* All this is wholly above our Reach, and contrary to all the Interests of Satan's Kingdom, and so distinguisheth the Operations of the Lords Spirit from these Delusions.

Sign 4. The Influences of the Lord's Spirit teach and endear to the Soul the Spirit

Spirituality of Worship. This comprehendeth (to glean a few particulars concerning it) these things following. 1. Some Views by Faith of God in Christ, in his Glorious Excellency, Majesty, and Mercy, the impression whereof filleth the Soul, when sifted before him. *My Soul thirsteth for thee ----- to see thy power and thy glory, &c. Ps. 63. 1, 2. We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image, from glory to glory, as by the spirit of the Lord, 2 Cor. 3. 18. 2dly. The outgoings of the whole Soul towards him in Faith, Love, Delight, and the other Graces of the Spirit. With my whole heart have I sought thee, Ps. 119. 10. As the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee O God, Ps. 42. 1, 2. Is. 26. 9. 3dly. Resting in him as filling the whole Soul, supplying all its Wants, satisfying all its Desires, and being alone the Christians all for Time and Eternity. One thing have I desired of the Lord ----- that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, &c. Ps. 27. 4. Whom have I in heaven but thee, Ps. 73. 25. See also Eph. 3. 19. Mat. 11. 28, 29.*

4thly. By Faith drawing Vertue from him, and of his fulness receiving Light, Life, and spiritual Strength for walking in his Ways, and resisting Temptations.

And Jesus immediatly knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, &c. Mark 5. 30.

And of his fulness have we all received, and Grace for Grace, Jo. 1. 16. see Isa. 12. 3.

5thly. Eating of the hidden Manna, Rev. 3. 17. By Faith feeding upon the Lord Jesus (if I may so express it) eating his Flesh and drinking his Blood in a spiritual Sence. The Bread of God is he which cometh down from Heaven, and giveth Life unto the World, &c. Joh. 6. 33, 34. Now, that this is above Nature, and subversive to the strongest Foundations of Satan's Kingdom, cannot but be manifest to these who have Eyes to discern. Only I shall draw a few Confectaries from it.

1. Ignorance of, and unacquaintedness with the Nature of Spiritual Worship, and that which is by Faith enjoyed therein, hath still given the Rise, Nourishment, and Vigour to the execrable Delusions of *Enthusiasm*, with other Heresies, whereby Shipwreck of Faith and a good Conscience hath been made, as will appear, if

we

we consider a particular or two in so many Words. 1. It is Natural to us to seek Repose, and chiefly when in great Distress, our soft Natures are exceedingly averse from Trouble, especially in that which affecteth the Conscience, the more Noble and tender part. It is the Voice of Nature, *viz. Who will shew us any good,* Pl. 4. 6. 2. True rest cannot be enjoy'd by an unhumbled Soul. It is found in Christ alone, and in him only in the way of Humiliation, and saving Faith, and therefore it is not attained by these whose Convictions issue not in that manner. *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, &c.* Mat. 11. 28, 29, 30. *If their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they accept of the punishment of their Iniquity, then will I remember my Covenant with Jacob, &c.* Levit. 26. 41. 42.

3. Hence, convinced but unhumbled Persons ly open unto, and are prone to entertain Hells gilded Delusions, which (tho' truly gross) do yet promise Rest, and thus have made Shipwreck, &c. 4thly. This severals of them have given to know, while they acknowledged that they could find no Satisfaction nor Repose in our

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way

way; For assuredly, *had they known the way of righteousness they had not turned from it*, 2 Pet: 2. 21. 22. But upon the least Suggestion towards that, their Answer would have been, *To whom shall we go but to thee, for thou hast the words of eternal life*, Joh. 6. 68. *They went out from us because they were not of us*, 1 Joh. 2. 19.

2. From the same source, *viz.* Ignorance of Spiritual Worship, have flown Idolatry, Superstition, and other gross Abominations in Worship, while Persons Ignorant of its Spirituality have sought to gratify the outward Senses and carnal Mind, by Sumptuous Structures, Harmonious Musick, pompous Appearances, &c. which amongst Papists and others, have wholly defaced the Worship of God.

3. From this Fountain have manifold Corruptions, both of Doctrine, Worship Discipline, and Government derived their Rise and Strength, and divers heavy Yokes have been imposed upon Consciences, as Expedients suited unto the Carnal Interests and Inclinations of Men, especially such as sway the Rains of Government amongst them: And that these Accomodations may, and ordinarily

have a Power of Selfish Reasonings to support them, and in some things deceive the Lord's Children, as being Cloathed with, and recommended by the specious Appearances of Duty and expediency; Yet the chief Source of such Projects is a Power of Aversion from the Institutions of Christ, as cross to our Corruptions, which procureth a *breaking his Bonds, and casting his Cords from us*: And these Devices are at no small Advantage towards a suitable Compliance from our innate Love to Ease and other secular Enjoyments, together with our prevalent Fears of Persecution, which maketh us ingenious to decline it, and contriveth or receiveth the most specious Pretexts for that effect, *Gal. 6. 12: Phil. 3. 18. Ps. 2. 3.*

EXERCISE, XII.

I shall give the remaining Evidences more succinctly.

Sign 5. **T**Hese saving Manifestations harmoniously agree with the Lord's way towards the Cloud of Witnesses recorded in his Word, *Heb. 11.* througout, and *12. 1. & Eph. 4. 3, 4, 5.* and with the real Experiences of the Saints in all Ages, who are in one way, and guided by the same Spirit; So that there is no difference among them about the Fundamentals of Religion, nor jarrings as to the Exercise thereof, in its more Essential Parts, tho there will be various Apprehensions in some things more remote, while we know in part, and Propheſie in part; Nothing of this is found in the Deluſions of Satan and of our own Hearts, but all here is of a Piece,

Sign 6.

Sign 6. They Decline not, but are confirmed and increased by the most exact Trial of the Word, *Pf.* 26. 3. & 139. 23, 24. and incline the Soul strongly to this, to which it subjecteth its self not with Pain, but Delight upon all Occasions ; And these Persons, Ordinances, or Writings, which are found most searching, faithful and useful this way, are accordingly imbraced, *Pf.* 141. 4. And whatsoever Mistakes may be mingled with Divine Manifestations, *As Wood, Hay and Stubble built upon the Foundation*, the Soul is ready to acknowledge, and glad that they are burnt up, howsoever trying the Dispensation be, *1 Cor.* 3. 15. Much Holy and cautious fear attendeth the Lord's Teaching. And hence it is (as to the new Nature) the Native propensity of these who are Taught by him to *come unto the Light*, and to ly still open to the nearest Searches and closest Discoveries which are made thereby ; tho the exercised Soul dare not make God a Lyar, by not acknowledging or denying that which the Lord's Spirit had made Evident from the Word, *Prov.* 28. 14. *Joh.* 3. 19, 20.

Sign 7.

Sign 7. They are accompanied with much Warmness of Heart towards these who fear the Lord: And howsoever there may be Differences among them, in regard of various degrees of Light; yet still Christ's Image is dear to them that fear him, as being Partakers of the same precious Faith, and under the same sweet Conduct in their way to Heaven. This Agreement of Experiences produceth sweet Harmony, *Pf. 16. 2, 3.* And it's observable, that under the heaviest Exercises, they are tender of these who fear the Lord, & are afraid to offend them, *Pf. 73. 15.* it is a black Mark to be regardless of *offending the Generation of the Righteous*, *Mat. 18. 5, 6.*

Sign 8. They are preserved, cherished, and advanced in a way of Conflict, while evil Spirits in concurrence with our own Darknes and fleshly Lusts, bend all their Powers and Policies against them, in endeavouring wholly to delete the Impressions made upon the Soul by the same, by bringing the whole of the Work under Question. In this the Disciple is as his Lord, *Mat. 4. 1, 2. &c.* compare *Luk. 4. 13.* where it is said, *that the Devil departed from him for a Season*, holding forth that
more

more Conflicts were yet abiding him. So the way to Heaven runeth through a course of Battles, and the War is not closed, but with the end of Life, *Rom. 13: 12. 1 Cor: 9. 26, 27. 2 Tim. 2. 3, 4, 5. Eph. 6. 12, 13. &c. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8:* And it is very remarkable that *Enthusiasts* discover sufficiently their own Delusions, by boasting of their Freedom from, and being raised above these Wrestlings. No Prophet nor Apostle, nay, nor Christ himself in his humbled State, did reach such an Elevation. The Scripture revealeth no such State in Time; Yea, teacheth the quite contrary: And there are as many Instances of this, as Examples of the Saints recorded there. What other Judgment then can we pass of this quietness, but that the *strong Man keepeth the House, and therefore all is at rest, Luk. 11. 21.*

Sign 9. Saving Manifestations (especially in a dark time) come not suddenly to their hight, having the stream of contrary Temptations and Lusts running with a strong Current against them, *Eph. 6. 12. Col. 3. 5. Gal. 5. 17. 24.* And therefore the Progress is carried on by resisting as it were unto Blood, *Heb. 12. 4.* And hence

hence by various Degrees, and with many Ups and Downs, yet solidly and successfully. And tho under an extraordinary Effusion of the Spirit in the Days of the Apostles (whose stay in one place must needs have been ordinarily but short, and therefore required the greater Dispatch, having the Gospel to publish throughout the World) and proportionably at other times, while the Lord was bringing his Church out of *Bab*le, under more than ordinary Out-lettings of his Spirit, the Work might have gone on the more quickly; yet still with an Evidence and Solidity suitable to its singularly prosperous and swift progress, *Acts* 2. 27. & 6. 30, 31, 32. &c. whereas the sudden reaching a great height of Spirituality and great Confidence in it, without any apparent Grounds, or being in case to give any tollerable Account of the Matter, smelleth rankly of Delusion, being a deceitful Building raised upon a sandy Foundation. I shall add no more, having scattered severals (upon various Accounts and Occasions) throughout these Exercises, which I thought not fit to resume. And now the chief part of my Design being

being pointed at, I shall conclude the whole with a few Exhortations.

Use 5. Of Exhortation, Then let us be Exhorted to search the Scriptures in dependence upon the Lord, for the Influences of his Spirit, that the *word of Christ may dwell in us richly in all wisdom*, Col. 3. 16. Joh. 5. 39. For Motives take these following.

Motive 1. The way of Life is pointed out there clearly, Ps. 119. 9. 2 Tim. 3. 15, 16. 2 Pet. 1. 19.

Motive 2. Satan's Devices and the Subtilities of our own Hearts are there unfolded, 2 Cor. 2. 11. Heb. 4. 12. 1 Cor. 14. 25.

Motive 3. It is the Sword of the Spirit for cutting the Knots of Temptations, Eph. 6. 17. The Lord Jesus made use of this Sword effectually against Satan, Mat. 4. 1, 2, 3, &c. and so do all his Followers through his Grace. For Directions in a Word, take these few.

Direct. 1. Accompany the reading or hearing the Word, and follow it forth with Prayer, that the Lord would *open the Eyes and give to behold wondrous things out of his Law*, deeply imprinting the Light therein contained, and which he is pleased from

from thence to carry in upon the Heart,
Pſ. 119. 18. &c. 143. 10. and 27. 11. &c.

Direct. 2. Improve the blessed Opportunities when the Lord is pleased to remove the Vail in some Measure, by opening his own Word, and opening the Heart to receive that which is taught there, 2 *Cor.* 3. 13. 18. *Luke* 24. 32. *Acts* 16. 14. Lose not, through Grace, such occasions, much may be gained in a short time.

Direct. 3. Observe carefully such Passages, by which the Lord gave Light and Relief amidst the deepest Plunges of Soul Trouble, by a clear Decision of the Case, as stated betwixt us and our Soul-Enemies.

Direct. 4. Meditate (under Heaven's Influences) much upon them, and attend upon the Lord by the Prayer of Faith, for a through riveting them upon the Heart. Let us not forgo that occasion for the Establishment of our Souls, and a more effectual Pursuit of our Spiritual Adversaries. Remember what *Israel* suffered by desisting too early from the Pursuit of the *Cananites*, *Judg.* 2. 3.

The next Branch of Exhortation shall be this.

Exh. 2

Exhorta 2. Let us in the whole of Spiritual Conflicts bring things to the Touchstone of the word, *Is*. 8. 20. as the only Rule in Dependence upon the Spirit's guiding. This I shall branch forth in the following Particulars.

1. Seek always to intertain high and Honourable Thoughts of the Lord, according to the large Discoveries of his Goodness and Mercy through Christ, which he hath vouchsafed in his Blessed Word. Temptations to hard Thoughts of him are strong, especially when the dark side of Providence is near, and Enemies urge, while yet the blessed end and issue are out of sight. It is the proper Season for Believing, when we see not; whereas a giving way to hard Thoughts of the Lord amidst afflicting Providences, cutteth the Sinews at every profitable endeavour.

2dly. Beware of receiving Satan's Suggestions or Injections, as if they were Divine Oracles. He is a *Liar and the Father of it*, *Joh*. 8. 44. His Flatteries to Presumption and Threats to Despondency are both carefully to be avoided, *Deut*. 29. 19. *Is*. 50: 11. *Pf*. 77: 8.

3dly.

3^{dly}. Take not some sweet Breathings for Refreshment and Encouragement under Exercises as Issues of the same; but attend upon the Lord for the more full, clear and decisive Significations of his revealed Will in whatsoever part it is attacked by our Enemies, and compare them (through Grace) with other parts of that same revealed Will, and the Records of Saints in Scripture, who received the Word *with all readiness of mind*, yet searched the Scriptures daily whether these things were so, *Act. 17. 11.* It is the sure way of Progress not to hasten, but humbly and quietly to wait for Confirmation in every step, that under the Influences of Grace, we may go on in the Evidence of the Word, and the pay'd way of the Cloud of Witnesses recorded there, *Eph. 4. 4. 8. 6. Heb. 12. 1, 2. Ps. 37. 37: Isa. 50: 10: 11.*

Thus I have finished the Heads of these Exercises (being retired) if this Mint shall stir up others more fitted for such a Work to give greater Discoveries, I shall Rejoice to have this Essay obscured by them. In the mean time, for as much as

it

it containeth solid Truths, tho'
weakly handled. I commit it to
the Great Shepherd of the Sheep,
not without some Confidence, that
through His Blessing, and the Influ-
ences of His Spirit, it may be of
Use to the few that heard, and o-
thers to whose Hands these Notes
may come.

PART

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PART II.

EXERCISE I.

G A L. III. 2.

This only would I learn of you, received ye the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of Faith?

HAVING finished the First, I proceed to the Second Doctrine from the Words, *viz.*

Doct. 2. *The word through which the Lord conveyeth the Influences of the Spirit, is the word of the Gospel in Opposition to the Law, and whatsoever Perversions of Gospel Doctrines flow from the abuse of the Law, it is called in the Text Hearing of Faith, as opposed to the (Law) or Works of the Law, which were introduced by the False Apostles.*

Before I enter upon the intended Purpose, I would have it considered once for all, That I take the Gospel here, not in a strict Sense, as mainly signifying the pleasant Systeme of Promises, but more largely, as Denoting the Complex of that Doctrine, which was Taught by the Apostles of Christ, in Opposition to the Delusions of the false Apostles, and other Seducers of that, and all succeeding times. To clear further this Doctrine, we may take notice of 2 Cor. 3.8.9. where the Gospel and the Law being compared, the one is called *The Ministration of Death and Condemnation*, in Opposition to the other, which is called *The Ministration of Righteousness and of the Spirit*, seing that thereby Righteousness, and the saving Influences of the Spirit alone are to be attained; And in the 6th verse, the Ministers of the one are called *The Ministers of the Letter*; and the other *The Ministers of the Spirit*: Forasmuch as the Blessings of the Covenant, conveyed by the Spirit, are enjoyed in the one, whereas the other, as considered separately, being void thereof, is but a killing Letter, where we are Taught, that the Law

Law is not of Faith, seing it neither teacheth Faith in Jesus Christ (which our first Parents, before their Fall, knew not, as not belonging to the Covenant they were under) nor can that Mother Grace, or any other of the Graces of the Spirit be thereby attained. The Law is designed to discover our Wants, but cannot supply them.

For opening further the Doctrine, I shall propose and Answer a few Questions.

Quest. 1. What are we to understand by the word of the Gospel?

Ans. It is that Word which holdeth forth the Gospel in its Purity, without declining to Extremes on either hand, and perverting or darkening it by contrary Errors. I shall (by way of Instance) touch a few things, being these which in a special Manner are cleared when the Gospel is Preached in Purity.

1. The Gospel taken complexly, as aforesaid, teacheth clearly and thoroughly Mans lost Estate, it taketh off all his Exceptions and Shifts whatsoever, and concludeth him under Sin, *O Generation of Vipers who hath warned you to flee from*

the wrath to come, &c. Math. 3. 7, 8, 9. That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God, Rom. 3. 19. and throughout the first three Chapters.

2. It demonstrateth clearly his utter Inability to arise out of that lost Estate: As also the *Enmity against God*, which is the Character of the *Carnal Mind*, Rom. 8. 7. And evidenceth it self in a special manner, against the Sweet Yoke of Christ, and the way of Salvation through him. For we being ignorant of God's Righteousness (as the Jews of Old) and going about to establish our own Righteousness, we will not submit our selves unto the Righteousness of God, Rom. 10. 3. And this Inability appeareth further, Forasmuch as the Power of God, the exceeding Greatness of his Power, and the workings of his Mighty Power, are necessary for working of Faith, Eph. 1. 19. 20. see Chap. 2, 1.

3. The Gospel representeth the Equity and Glory of the Lord's Proceedings, whatsoever be his Disposal concerning Man, he hath destroyed himself, and deserved pure wrath by every Sin, much more

more by all ; and whatsoever can befall,
no wrong is done, seing the wages of Sin
is Death, *Rim.* 6. 13. *O Israel thou hast
destroyed thy self*, *Hos.* 13. 9. *Jer.* 18. 23.
45. &c. *Rom.* 9. 14, 15. &c.

4. This word of the Gospel discover-
eth Christ in his Person, Office, Estates,
and whatsoever concerneth Mystery of
Redemption, both in its Purchase and
Application. He is the Marrow of the
Word, the Substance of all that's re-
vealed in it, whether Doctrines, Types,
Prophecies, or Promises, &c. *1 Cor.* 2. 2.
All that we have to know, or make
known, is contain'd there. I deter-
mine not to know any thing among you
save Jesus Christ, and him Crucified. See
2 Cor. 1. 20.

5. It unfoldeth the Doctrine of Faith
in its Nature and various Actings, and as
distinguished from many false Faiths,
which are the most effectual Engines of
Satan for destroying Souls. Therein,
namely in the Gospel, *Is the Righteous-
ness of God revealed from Faith to Faith*,
Rom. 1. 17. See *2 Pet.* 1. 5.

6. It teacheth the Efficacy of Faith,
or rather of the Lord's Spirit working this
way

way, and carrying on the exercised Soul, in the Path of Believing throughout the several steps of the paved Road to Glory, until Faith be swallowed up in Eternal Sight and Enjoyment, 1 Cor. 1. 30. Rom. 5. 1. 2. 3. Jo. 6. 35.

Quest: 2. How, and in what Respects is the Doctrine of the Gospel opposed to the Law?

Ans: 1. Negatively.

1. Not as obscuring the Doctrine of the Law, which, instead of being darkened, is thereby set in the clearest Evidence of Light. The Law-giver himself was pleased to Commence his more solemn Administration by a large and close Exposition of it, wherein he giveth its true and through import, especially in these parts, which were perverted by the false Teachers of that and former Ages, and he refused these false and calumnious Glosses, by which the Scribes and Pharisees, with a great Multitude addicted to them, went near to abolish it intirely. This maketh a considerable part of his Sermon upon the Mount, *Mat.* 5. 6. and 7. Chap. And the necessary Divorce of Elect Sinners from the Law

as a Husband, that they may be Married to Christ, is wrought by the Spirit of the Lord's unvailing and inforcing the Law upon the Conscience, which appeareth from Rom. 7. 9, 10. *I was alive without the Law once, but when the Commandment came, Sin revived and I died, &c.* As also, the Believer, according to his Progress in his Work and Warfare, is made to see *an end of all Perfection, but that the Lord's Commandments are exceeding broad*, Ps: 119: 96. And in the Advance of his Christian Course, his Heart is still engaged more and more to the most exact strictness of truly Spiritual and Evangelick Obedience; *For the Law is not made void, but establisht by Grace.*

2. Neither by diminishing its Obligation, which both as to Mandate and Sanction, is owned to be full and untouched, and nothing impaired, but all kept intire in its Accomplishment by the Surety. *Do we then make void the Law through Faith, &c.* Rom. 3. 31. *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in Sin, that Grace may abound &c?* Rom. 6. 12. Neither could its Demands have been satisfied by any of, or all the Creatures, the
Cove-

Covenant of Works being violated, *Christ is alone the end of the Law for Righteousness*, Rom: 10: 4.

3. Not by covering the Transgressions of the Law, or teaching to have low Thoughts of any thing contrar to it, Whereas on the other hand, nothing doth more highten Sin, and discover its Enormous Aggravations, than the Doctrine of the Gospel. *When I kept silence my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. I acknowledged my sin unto thee, &c.* Ps: 32.

3. *He that covereth his sin shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy*, Prov: 28: 13; See also Deut: 32: 6; Zech: 12: 10:

4. Not by enervating the use of the Law in Subserviency to the Gospel, for Convincing, wounding and humbling the Sinner: In all which, and other such Uses it is a School-master to lead us unto Christ, Gal: 3: 24; Rom: 3: 19, 20:

Ans: Positively, The Gospel is opposed to the Law. 1. In that the Gospel plainly and peremptorly teacheth that no legal Performances of sinful Creatures under whatsoever Pretext, can amount to the least part of that Righteousness, where-

wherein the Sinner may stand before the Tribunal of the Just and Holy God.

2. That it driveth wholly out of Self.

1. As to Principles, teaching us, that neither our Natural Faculties, acquired Abilities, nor common Gifts, or Graces of the Spirit, are the main Source or Principle, from which we must Act; but that even the Gracious Soul, howsoever established, is to look higher, and to live by Faith in Jesus Christ from Moment to Moment, and must needs slip, in so far as he leaneth to any Grace, or Attainment. *In my Prosperity I said I shall never be moved, thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled, &c.* Ps. 30. 6. 7. *Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding,* Prov. 3. 5. See *Ips.* 2. 7. 23. *Gal.* 2. 20. 2dly. As to the end, he who is the *Alpha*, in the Principle, the first and great Efficient Cause, is also the Believers *Omega* in design. The true God, as manifested in the Gospel, is that Great and Ultimat End in which the Gospel teacheth that all our Thoughts, Affections, and Motions should Center, and be swallowed up as the Rivers and Brooks in the Great Sea. *Whom have I in the*
the

the heavene but thee,&c. Ps. 73. 25. *Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God,* 1 Cor. 10 31. And this the Gospel not only teacheth, but effectuateth through Grace; And thus Self, under whatsoever Disguise, is gradually drained out. A sight of the Pearl and Treasure procureth an effectual Divorce from every other Lord or Lover, *Matth. 13: 44. If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me,* Mat. 16. 24. See 10. 38. Mak 8. 34. 3dly. As to the Motives, the Gospel teacheth; Yea, and effectually bringeth the Soul to be Influenced unto, and Quickened in new Obedience, more by the constraining Love of Christ, than all the Threats of the Law or Terroures of Hell; Thus *the law is not made for a righteous man to hem him in,* 1 Tim. 1. 9. for his Delight is to walk in these ways, his Obedience being the Reflection of *the Love of Christ shed abroad in his heart,* Rom. 5. 5. *The love of Christ constraineth us,* &c. 2 Cor. 5. 14. 4thly. As to Means, Christ is all these. *To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain,* Phil. 1. 21. And the Gospel teacheth to live in continued Applications

cations by Faith unto him, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption, 1 Cor. 1.30. Thus Self is wholly cast out, as to the Lord's Appointment, and shall be by Degrees in effect, that he who glorieth, may Glory only in the Lord in time and for ever.

Quest. 3. Why is it that the Spirit is conveyed through this and no other Channel, especially not by the Law as opposite to the Gospel?

Ans. Although we need no other Cause, but the good pleasure of God, who hath ordered it so; yet there are somethings very Comely in the Dispensation, which may afford so many Reasons.

Reason 1. The Gospel exalteth Christ. The whole Scope and Marrow of all that it containeth, is to display the relucency of his Glory, in the Salvation of Elect Sinners from the Counsel of Peace, and the several Periods of its Revelation, untill the Execution in the fullness of time, as also in every step of the Application till Glory Crown the whole, *Zach. 6. Gen; 3. 15. Jo. 3. 16. Heb. 11. Jer. 23: 6.*

Reas: 2,

Reas: 2. It manifesteth the Sovereignty of Love and Freedom of Mercy, fully clearing and demonstrating, that all things are contrary in lost Man; and no Reason for the least Mercy, much less for any saving Fruit of it can be assigned, but the free Bounty of him *who hath Mercy on whom he will have Mercy*, Rev. 9. 16, 18. *By Grace are ye saved*, Eph: 2: 58: see Math: 11: 25, 26.

Reason 3. The Doctrine of the Gospel, as before explained, battereth down the Presumptuous Pride of Man's Spirit, by a clear displaying of his utter Darkneſs, Impotence and Emnity; Thus sheweth that all we can do is to destroy our Selves, and that the Honour of this Salvation belongeth only and intirely unto the Lord, and in nothing to us who have no part in it. In this manner *all boasting is excluded*, and we all concluded under Sin, Rom. 3. 27. and verses 11, 12, 13. Hof. 13. 9.

Reason 4. The Gospel in opposition to the Law is appointed as the Mean of conveying of Rest unto the Soul, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*, &c. Math. 11. 28, 29.

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There remaineth a Rest to the Pople of God, *Heb:4.8,9,10.* *Moses* considered as a Type of the Law, brought not the Children of *Israel* to *Canaan*, this was left for *Joshua*, an eminent Type of *Jesus Christ* in that Work.

EXERCISE II.

Use 1. of Information and Trial.

THIS having been promised for clearing the Doctrine, I now proceed to somewhat for improvement. I shall then for Information and Conviction deduce from thence some Discoveries. 1. Of legal Doctrines. 2. Of such as are of a legal strain. 3. I shall offer some Remarks upon the one and the other.

By legal Doctrines, I understand these which exalt Corrupt Nature under whatsoever pretence, whether directly or indirectly, more grossly or subtilly, they may be reduced in a great part to the following Heads.

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1. The making *Works* any part of our Righteousness before God, whether they be the Works of the Regenerated, or Unregenerated, whether by attributing any intrinſick Worth to them, or aſcribing this to the purchaſe of Chriſt. as if they were thus dignified by it, contrary to the whole deſign and ſtrain of the Goſpel, as is cleared by our Divines at length. *By the deeds of the law there ſhall no fleſh be juſtified in his ſight. --- Now the righteouſneſs of God, without the law is manifeſted,* Rom: 3. 21. 22. See alſo Gal. 2. 16. and 5. 4.

2dly. By aſſigning, as the Fruit of Chriſt's Death, a New Covenant made with all, but upon more eaſie Terms, yet ſtill of *Works*, which the Elect by a good Improvement of the more common Helps do imbrace and perform; Thus ſubverting the Goſpel by a Confuſion of the Two Covenants. *To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace but of debt,* Rom. 4. 5. *If by Grace, then it is no more Works: otherways Grace is no more Grace,* Chap: 11. 6.

3dly. By conſidering Faith in the matter of Juſtification, as a Work under what

whatsoever Disguise, contrary to the design of the Gospel, which excludeth all Works. *By grace are ye saved through faith, not of works lest any man should boast,* Eph. 2. 8, 9. *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness,* Rom. 4. 5.

4thly. By ascribing somewhat to Nature in the acting of Faith and new Obedience, contrary to what the Scripture teacheth of fallen Man's lost Estate, *who is dead in trespasses and sins,* Eph. 2. 1. As much unfit for Spiritual Exercises as the Dead are for Business of Life : Yea, tho' renewed, he is utterly unable for any thing without the Influences of Heaven continued from Moment to Moment. *Sing ye unto her a vineyard of red wine. I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment* Is. 27. 2, 3. *without me ye can do nothing,* Jo. 15. 5. see also 2 Cor. 3. 5. Jer: 10. 23.

5thly. Such Erred here, who do not sincerely acknowledge the Emnity of Corrupt Nature, Rom: 8. 7. while they look upon Persons well Educated, and otherways Morally Honest, and legally Divout, as under some Dispositions to-
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towards saving Grace, tho' not Regenerated : Whereas we find that the Scribes and Pharisees, howsoever abounding in Religious Exercises, and of a smooth Conversation, *Luk. 18. 11.* yet were the most Invective Enemies of the Lord Jesus Christ, and pursued him to the Death, while the Publicans and Sinners gladly received him, *Mat: 12. 23, 24. Luk. 7. 24. 30. Mat: 23. to the end. Luk: 16. 14.* Hence it was that the Devout Jews attained not the law of righteousness, while yet the Gentiles did, *Rom. 9. 31, 32. and 10. 3.* For these Moralists are the greatest Opposers of Christ in a way of Believing, because much rooted in a Law-way, not emptied but full of Self. *I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing, Rev. 3. 17.* Persons of that Set are much out of the way of Conviction, because of the Clokes which they have for their Sin.

6thly. These who give such Accounts of Faith, and especially in the matter of Justification, as to comprehend under, or together with it, Repentance, Love, and new Obedience, *still works* with a little Gospel fair'd or tincture, yet utterly per-

verting

verting the Gospel of Christ, and affording to proud Nature occasion of Boasting contrary to, Ps. 115. 1. 2. *Not unto us O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory for thy mercy, &c. When ye shall have done all these things which are Com-manded you, say we are unprofitable Servants, &c. Luk. 17. 10. see Rom. 3. 27.*

Lastly, To conclude, I subjoin the Delusions of *Antinomians*, who pretending highly to exalt Christ and free Grace, do yet betray it, being Enemies to his sweet Yoke, and many ways encouraging Sloath and laxness of Walk, while they teach a state of more constant Joy, in Opposition to the continual wrestlings of the Believer, which they deride; and yet the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are full of them. See Ps. 13. & 69. & 73. & 130. & 140. throughout. Mat. 11. 12. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. 1 Cor. 9. 25, 26. &c. Such easie ways, flattering Corrupt Nature, are assuredly False, being contrary to the strait gate and narrow way, which the Scripture teacheth, Mark: 7. 13, 14.

For the Second, *viz. A legal Strain,* this is found in such, who disclaiming
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the forementioned and other such Errors, yet serve the same Design, and darken the Gospel on all occasions; and this proud Nature is not battered down, but strengthened. I shall (for Example) set down these two particulars of many, for discovering this dangerous strain. Which appears,

1. When Man's lost Estate is not faithfully and fully held forth, particularly by discovering it from the Sins of the Day, the more special and proper Evils of Persons and Places in a close Application of Doctrine. This was the way of our Lord Jesus, and of all the Prophets and Apostles, *Math. 3. throughout Isa. 58: 1, 2, 3. Acts 2. 36, 37. & 7. 51, 52.* Neither can it be expected that the Lord will Bless a General Strain, while these Evils are passed; things more remote and not close to the Circumstances of Times, Places, and Persons, being only insisted upon quite contrary to the Tenor of Doctrine through out the whole Scripture, which cometh still close to the proper Concerns of the Time, by these reaching effectually Light into the Soul,

as to the great and Fundamental Matters of true Religion.

2. The strain is legal, when the Sinner is not driven out of *Self*, being taught the Life of Faith, and guarded against by paths of all kinds, and on all hands: But Duties are pressed without discovering Man's Inability of himself, even tho' Gracious, and without teaching the way of applying to Christ by Faith, for performing them, *without me ye can do nothing*, Jo. 15. 5. *Lord increase our faith*, Luk. 17. 5. see 2 Cor. 3. 5. Jer. 10. 23. But for want of this the Sinner is driven more deeply into himself, and so spineth his Ruine out of his own Bowels. So much for this.

Now, I offer some *Conjectaries*.

Conject. 1. Seing, as appeareth from the forementioned & many other places, the Scope of the Spirit of the Lord, is to abase the lofty Spirit of fallen Man; the Darkness must be Dreadful, which is at the Root of waying a contrary way; The Voice of the Soul under due Impressions of the Glory & Majesty of God, and his own Vileness is much opposite to this. *Who is me, for I am vile, because I am a man of unclean lips,*

&c. If. 6. 5. see also Rom. 3. from the 10. Verse.

Confect: 2. Forasmuch as the byass of Man's Spirit towards *Self*, is so strong, that nothing less than Omnipotency can stop the Course; yea, even the Eminentest Saints have been, and are, much exercised with, and prejudged by this Root, *which beareth Gall and Wormwood.* What Strangers must they be to their own Hearts, who Doctrinally flatter proud Nature, and espouse its Quarrel? Assuredly the Law of Sin in the Members, and an evil Heart of Unbelief, which still departeth from the living God, are Matter of continual Exercise to every Believer, who therefore will be very far from espousing the Cause of proud and corrupt Nature, *Rom: 7. 23, 24. Heb. 3. 12.*

Confect: 3. We may understand from this, the Lamentable State of the Church, when the pure Doctrine of the Gospel is Darkned, and legal Errors prevail; Or, at best, in stead thereof, the Law is inculcated with a little Evangelical Tincture. It was otherways with them when the Candle of the Lord shined upon his People: But upon Declinings from
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the Lord in all Ages, still have followed Corruptions of the Mind and Way *from the Simplicity that is in Christ*, 2 Cor: 11. 3. What Causes of Humiliation have we for this great Evil, or compound of Evils? And greatly ought we to prize such, who, through Grace, mint a right at Straightness in the great Concerns of the Gospel, tho' imperfectly and possibly in the Dark as to several Concerns of the Time.

Conject: 4. We see here one Reason, why the Elect cannot be Deceived, not from any thing in themselves, but being brought into a way of believing in the Lord Jesus, and taught to live by Faith, and so to walk in newness of Life, they shall be preserved and carried foreward by the Lord in that way; especially being he who prayed for Peter, in a common Cause, that *his faith might not fail*, is also *the Author and finisher of Faith*, to each of his Children, Luk, 22. 31, 32. Heb: 12. 2. see Mat: 24. 24. 1Pet: 1. 5. Gal: 2. 20.

Conject: 5. That it is a blessed Dispensation to be crossed in seeking Rest by the Law, and always to find Matters worse in moving that way; Thus the Soul is

Divorced from that Dangerous and Subtile Husband, that it may be espoused to Christ, *Rom: 7.* throughout. *Isa: 54. 5.*

Confess: 6. That in a way of Sanctification, deep and well grounded Knowledge of the Truths of Religion will be attained, and the Believer inabled to discern contrary Errors, how Subtile soever from what he daily learneth and experienceth, *Thou through thy Commandments hast made me wiser than mine Enemies --- I have more understanding than all my Teachers, &c. Ps. 119. 98, 99.*

EXERCISE III.

I Go now foreward to Discover a little of the Evil of legal Practices, wherein I shall speak a word to the following Heads.

1. I shall open them a little in the General,
2. Shew the principal Sources from which they flow,
3. Give a touch at corrupt Streams that flow from these Sources,
4. Discover somewhat of the hurt-

hurtfulness of them, which also may be applied to legal Doctrines.

For the first, I understand by legal Practices, 1. *Acting from somewhat within* (without looking higher) whether Natural Faculties or acquired Abilities ; yea, or Graces of the Spirit, for even these may not be leaned to, and will fail if Stress be laid on them, and that we ascend not by Faith to him, who only giveth, preserveth and quickeneth them. In this Sense, namely as separately considered, they are but *an arm of flesh*, yea ye cannot serve the Lord, for he is a holy God, Josh. 24. 19. *Not that we are sufficient of our selves to think any thing as of our selves : but our sufficiency is of God*, 2 Cor: 3. 5. see Jer: 17. 5.

2. *Resting in Self*, whether meerly the appeasing Conscience's Clamours ; or the Prospect more Grose or Subtile of forming a Righteousness to our selves, or whatsoever other ways it may be, which Centereth in *Self*, Ps. 73 25 Isa: 58. 1, 2, 3. 4. &c.

3. Taking the Honour in part or in whole to our selves, Blessing our own right Hand whatsoever way, or how
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Subtile however, this may be brought to pass. *They sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their grag,* Hab. 1. 16.

For the Second, The Source of these Evils is more especially two fold.

1. They flow from great Ignorance, and that of six Things, 1. Of the Law it self, which is Spiritual, and condemneth the least Motions and Inclinations towards Sin, *Rom: 7. 7. 12. 14.* and requireth Conformity of the whole Man in all his Faculties, Thoughts, Words and Actions, unto the whole thereof in all its Parts, as also the outmost Degrees of Perfection and Perseverance therein, to the end, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of the law to do them,* Gal. 3. 10. See also Deut. 27. 26. Mat. 22. 37. 2^{dly}. Of our own Hearts, which are a Mysterious Depth of Deceits, and desperate Wickedness, the Bottom whereof is only reached by an All-seeing Eye, *Ser: 17. 9. 3^{dly}*. Of many hidden Aggravations of our Sins, which tho' a Carnal Eye seeth not, yet do exceedingly fill and Afflict the Mind, when the Eyes of the Understanding are in some measure opened. In

many

many things we offend all, Jam. 3. 2. And
 the Radiant Beams of the Sun of Righte-
 ousness thinning into the Soul, make
 great Discoveries of that which before
 was not thought upon, *Whatsoever doth*
make manifest is light, Eph. 5. 12, 13. 4thly.
 Of the utter Inability and Emnity of
 Corrupt Nature against the ways of God.
Ye cannot serve the Lord, for he is a holy God,
 Josh. 24. 19. *The carnal mind is emnity a-*
gainst God, Rom: 8. 7. see also Eph. 2. 1.
 5thly. Of the Loathsomeness of all our
 Righteousnesses, as being poisoned by
 the Venom of Corruption still flowing
 from its Fountain in the Heart, as a li-
 ving but deadly Spring. *We are all as an*
unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are
as filthy rags, Isa. 64. 6. *All these I do*
count but dung, that I may win Christ, Phil.
 3. 7, 8. 6thly. And chiefly the want of
 Illumination of the Mind in the Know-
 ledge of Christ, 2 Cor. 4. 6. For when-
 soever some thing of the Excellency of
 this Knowledge is tasted by the Soul, u-
 pon a saving discovery, these things
 which some time bulked in the Eye, are
 immediately accounted what they truly
 are

are but Loss and Dung, and the Exercised Person is happily brought to a joyful parting, *Math.* 13. 44, 45. *Phil.* 3. 7, 8. All this holds in a Proportion to their Prevalence, even after the Reign is broken by a gracious and saving Change.

2. Another principal Source of these Evils, is the total want of, or much weakness as to true Humiliation before God, and hence proceedeth. 1. The intertaining a Presumption of some Strength and Sufficiency, the Person not being brought to see that in him dwelleth no good thing, and therefore not Dispairing, in a Holy Manner, of himself, and all the Creation besides, as being perswaded that nothing towards his Delivery can flow from thence: Forasmuch as, the Destroying of our Selves, is the true Account of all that we can reach, *Hos.* 13. 9. By reason of the Defect of this, the Person taketh such Courses as the Prodigal, who sought many a poor Shift before he would entertain the least Motion of returning and humbling himself before his Father, *Luk.* 15. 16. 2dly. From the same Source, *viz.* Unhumbledness, as said is, proceedeth much want of Quietness

ness of Mind, under the hand of God, *Bearing his Indignation until he arise and plead their cause*, Mic. 7. 9. Accepting the Punishment of Iniquity in a due Acknowledgment that none can be Inflicted, which is not more then thoroughly deserved on our part, and would be righteously laid on by the Lord, *Livit.* 26. 40. Hence, in stead of being *Dumb with Silence, and putting the Mouth in the Dust*, Lam: 3. 28. Luk; 15. 18, 19. Ps. 39. 9. Proud Nature spurneth and laboureth also, as in the Fire vainly pursuing many a selfish Course.

In the Third place, we may take Notice of the Streams, which flow from these Sources. I shall insist in a few.

Stream 1. Swarms of Resolutions, Vows, and Promises, and often times Personal Covenantings in a Selfish way, all flowing from the secret Thoughts of some Sufficiency in our selves from want of true Humiliation, *All that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee we shall hear it, and do it*, Deut. 5. 27. see Josh. 24. from 14.

Stream 2. Great Forewardness and sudden Undertaking in the Lord's Matters, the Person not knowing his own
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Wickedness and utter want of Strength, but imagining there is some Stock within, and therefore living upon it, and Acting from it; whereas, if he were truly Humbled, he would see that the way of Man is not in himself, and that it is not in Man that walketh to direct his Steps, and therefore would, in the Lord's Strength, go instantly out of Self in a way of Believing, *Jer.* 10. 23, *Luk.* 17. 4.

Stream 3. Much Inequality of Conversation, the Person being sometimes exceedingly Fervent under some Eminent Judgment, Mercy, or what ever else may fill the Sails; At other times as cold and indifferent, sometimes exceedingly lifted up, at other times as much Dejected and cast down, without that Steadiness, which is the Fruit of a Gospel Frame, *Then believed they his word --- They soon forgot his works,* *Ps.* 106. 12, 13. see *Exod.* 14. 31. and 15. 1.

Stream 4. A servil way in performing Religious Duties, more by Fear and the Pressure of Conscience, than with Sweetness and Delight. *God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power of love, and of a sound mind,* 2 *Tim;* 1. 7. see *Rom:* 8. 15. *Gal:* 4. 24.

Stream

Stream 5. Much sad Mixture of Frettings with Sorrow for Sin, whereby its Kindlyness and sweet Fruits are exceedingly marred: Some gracious Persons want not a great Tincture of this; yea, none are free of it, tho it reign not in these who are under Grace, *Job* and *Jeremiah* cursed the day of their Birth, *Job* 3. 3. *Jer.* 20. 14, 15. *Pf.* 37. 1. 2, 3. more of this will fall in afterwards; I only subjoin, that remains of these may be found in gracious Persons by reason of proud Natures Byass towards the Old Covenant, tho' yet the Believer be *not under the Law, but under Grace*, *Rom.* 6. 14.

Now I come to the last, which is the hurtfulness of legal Doctrines and Practices, concerning which, take these Following instances of many.

Danger 1. They strengthen the chief and most destructive part of Man's Enmity, *viz.* His Propensity to oppose the Lord in a way of Believing, while proud Nature is Flattered and the Person Rooted in a way of acting from and for Self. For they (speaking of professing People) being ignorant of God's righteousness, and
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going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God, Rom: 10. 7. You will not come unto me, that ye might have life, Jo. 5. 40.

Danger 2. They Arrest wretched Man under the Dominion of evil Spirits, and bind him with Chains so much the stronger, that they are Secret, Unobserved, and covered with fair and specious Appearances. Hence, Convictions are warded off, because the Person hath a great deal to plead for himself. The state of Matters seems to be the same with meer Legalists, and Gracious Persons, as to that which appeareth to the Eye; And therefore they may continue not only hid from others, who fear the Lord, but also from themselves; while like the *foolish Virgins*, they accompany the *Wise* to every External Performance. And it addeth not a little to the strength of these Chains, that they have great Advantages from the strong Current of Nature, which runneth full that way.

Danger 3. They bind under the heaviest Damps of Soul Trouble aftervvards, vvhen the festred Wound is ripped up again

gain. They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, &c. Jer: 8.

11. and searched it must be to the Bottom, othervvays the Person is utterly and irrecoverably undone, as continuing upon a false Foundation.

Danger 4. The strength of Lust is no-ways broken by the outmost hight of legal Reformation, and if somewhat restrained, as Waters kept up, they either overflow all their Banks, or find some secret Vent, and the more hid the more Dangerous; For the Law hath not the Promises of the Spirit, and Sin retaineth its Dominion over all that are under it, Rom: 6. 14. 2 Cor. 3. 6, 7. Gal: 4. 25. 28. Thus, howsoever fair the Appearances be, the Soul containeth in its Estate of Emnity, and under Satan's Power, the grand Design of the Gospel is opposed, and Self is put in the place of the Lord Jesus, which, if not mercitully prevented, must issue into inevitable Ruine, Eph. 2. 7. 8.

EXERCISE IV.

Use of Trial.

WE may in the next place improve this for *Trial*, and search into this Great Concern, *viz.* Whether we be under the Law, or under Grace, as a Matter of such Weight, that our Happiness and Misery, in Time and Eternity dependeth on it; For this End let us Advert unto the Similitude of Marriage which the Apostle useth, *Rom. 7. 1. 23. 4.* where amongst other things, we are taught the absolute necessity of being Divorced from *the Law as our first Husband, that we may be espoused to Christ*, I shall therefore as the Lord enableth, compare and oppose to one another these who are *Married to the Law*, and such as are *espoused to Christ*, keeping still the Similitude of Marriage, that the Trial may be the more fair and full, the one giving Light unto the other. And thus shall serve for the first Mark.

Mark

Mark 1. Then in Marriage there is a closeness of Union, the nearest that can have place among Mankind, in a Natural way: So these who are Married to the Law, have bound themselves to it as an Husband, and know no other way of Acting than that which is meerly Legal, suited to the Covenant of Works, as we abuse that Covenant. In this Case the first Husband is not Dead, and we know no other way, but that of our Application to him in all our Concerns, *Rom. 7. 1.*

In opposition to this, these who are Married to Christ, are nearly United to, and by Faith apply unto him in all their Concerns, as their Husband, living and acting in a way of Believing. *The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the son of God, Gal. 2. 20. see Luk. 17. 5. &c.*

Mark 2. There is in Marriage Tenderness of Love, the greatest that can have place in Nature; So these who are Married to the Law are much endeared to a legal way. Hence, so many Doctrinal Errors have been broached and abetted in all Ages, for maintaining and defend-

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ing the Interests of Proud Nature, and so endeared to the Soul, is that way of acting from, and for Self, under a great variety of Disguises, that the strongest Convictions before a humbling Work, do much more strengthen than abate it, while the Soul under its heaviest Pressures, rather turneth more strongly inward than is driven out of Self, of which it knoweth nothing until the Eyes be opened in a saving way. *Have patience with me* (saith the Man in the Parable) *and I will pay thee all*, Math. 18. 26. This Byass is suitable to corrupt Nature, and exalting it self.

In Opposition to which, these who are Married to the Lord Jesus, find themselves much pained, when the Byass of their Corrupt Hearts inclineth them to this selfish way; And upon the contrary on all Occasions, they press in the Lord's strength, to go out of Self in a way of Believing, and it is their Delight to live a begging Life, lying at the Lord's Footstool, and waiting upon him for every Crumb, rejoicing to be Bankrupts having nothing, but obliged for every thing, and waiting for it from Sovereign

and free Mercy through Christ; yet without turning the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ into Licentiousness. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, &c. Ps. 37. 23. see Jer. 10. 23. 2 Cor. 3. 5. Jud. verse 4.

Mark 3. In Marriage there is a Mutual Comforting one another, tho' the whole World should forsake them, they will cleave to one another; So these who are Married to the Law, when fore put to it by outward Judgments, sharp Convictions, weakenings of Conscience, or any other way whatsoever, seek Relief and Solace from the Law by some pretended good in Heart or Life performed, or purposed: As also by Excuses and Extenuations of Guilt, and if nothing, nor all of these will serve the Turn, they will patch up what is wanting with Christ, and a Faith of their own Moulding, of which afterwards. *Think not to say we have Abraham to our father, Mat. 3. 9. We be Abraham's seed, &c. Jo. 8. 33. see Rom: 9. 31, 32, 33.*

Contrary to this, these that are Married to Christ under all their Temptations, Tribulation, Convictions from the Word and

Spirit; and Challenges of Conscience, do humbly take with Guilt, and flee to God in Christ for Pardon and Healing, being Self condemned, not daring to Exrenuate their Sin, farless to Justify themselves, Ps: 120. 1. & 130. throughout, and 143. 1, 2, 3. &c. They have nothing in themselves to Center upon, even tho' renewed in the Spirit of their Minds, but *all their Springs are in him who is the Lord their Righteousness*, Ps. 87. 7. Jer. 23. 6. Neither can they sit down at rest till they find Vertue for healing from the Lord Jesus under all their Pressures.

Mark 4. According to the Marriage, so are the Fruits; These that are Married to the Law turn inward, and what they reach is derived thence; whereas the other have recourse to God in Christ by Faith, and what they attain is reached in that way, 2 Cor: 3. 5. Jo. 15. 5.

Mark 5. Such as have been Married to the Law, and afterwards come to be Espoused to the Lord Jesus, find considerable Difficulty in being Divorced from the Law in order to these Espousals. Parting is not easie in a Married estate, and the Difficulty is here much greater than in

in being brought to leave the Pursuit of former Lusts ; we have a particular Account of the whole of this, *Rom. 7.* throughout. From whence we may conclude.

Sing 1. That such continue Married to the Law, who have never found the necessity of a supernatural Work to Divorce them from it : For such as are Divorced, as to their estate, being Married to Christ, find the necessity of being still further delivered in all their after Exercises, till Glory Crown the Work.

Sing 2. These are under the Law, who are Strangers to true and saving Faith, and any thing they reach, which is like unto it, is but an adulterated Work of the Law, which may be thus branched out, 1. It is thus with such who have never been truly exercised before God, under the Sense of their utter Aversion from the only way of Salvation by Faith in Jesus Christ, *Jo. 5. 40. Rom. 8. 3.* which Enmity is expressed by a strong Propensity to a contrary way of working, by acting from and for Self ;

and these who have never found the necessity of a mighty Work of Grace, for bringing off from the one way, which is utterly Subversive to the Gospel, and inclining to the other, which is both above Nature, and contrary to the strongest Propensity of proud Natures, are certainly under the power of these Evils, and of that wrong Byass which hath never yet been removed by the mighty Power of God. *Israel* which followed after the Law of Righteousness, hath not attained to the Law of Righteousness --- because they sought it not by Faith, but as it were by the Works of the Law, &c. *Rom.* 11. 31, 32. *Wherefore do you spend your Money for that which is not bread? And your labour for that which satisfieth not, &c.* *Isa.* 55. 2. see *Psa.* 110. 3.

2dly. Their Faith is an Aduiterated Work of the Law, whose Hearts have never been ploughed by a convincing, wounding, and humbling Work of the Spirit in order to their fleeing to God in Christ by saving Faith: Not that this is any price for appeasing Justice, but it is the Lord's way of working to plough up the fallow ground, and not to sow among thorns.

the Lord prepareth these whom he maketh his Husbandry, 1 Cor 3. 9. before he cast in the Eternal Seed, Jer: 4. 3. Luk. 3. 3, 4, 5. Hof. 13. 9. 3dly. Who have not (tho' made willing) truly found their utter Inability to believe as real, as to fulfil the whole Law. The Power of God, yea the exceeding greatness of his power, the workings of his mighty power, even that power which raised Christ from the dead, is put furth in them that believe: All this is necessary, for what can be expected from these who are dead in Trespasses and Sins? And if vigorous in any thing, keen in their Enmity against God, and aversion from the Yoke of Christ. Let us break their bands assunder, and cast away their cords from us, Pl. 2. 3. Rom. 8. 7. Eph: 1. 19, 20, and 2. 20. 4thly. Whose Faith is not the Fruit of a special Work of the Spirit, but being hammered by themselves out of their own Forge, is but Wild and Bastard Faith, it was not Born in the House, and shall not inherit the Blessing. Such is the Glory of the Spirit's Work working Faith, that he designeth himself by it, and pleaceth it among his Titles. We have the same spirit of faith, &c. 2 Cor: 4.

13. Ps. 116 10: *5thly.* Whose Faith is exercised upon an unknown Christ, their Minds having never been inlightned in the Knowledge of him by a special Work, for otherways assuredly vve knowv him not, our litteral and traditional Knowvledge is but Darknes. *I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world, Jo. 17. 6. God who commandeth light to shine out of darknes, hath shined in our hearts, 2 Cor: 4. 6. see Jo. 14. 22.* *6thly.* Their Faith is utterly vvrong vvwhich is not accompanied vvith a kindly Divorce. 1. From other Lords, former Lustts. *Other Lords and Lovers besides thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name, Isa. 26. 13.* 2. All Creatures and Duties as to a Centering and resting in them, *Math: 13. 44. Phil. 3. 7, 8.* and that vvith Joy, for othervvays it is no real parting vvwhile the Heart cleaveth to them. So much for this Sign.

Sign 3. The Marriage to the Lavv and to Christ, may be knowvn by the different Stamp of the Spirit, in the one and the other. 1. These are under the Lavv, vvho are chiefly influenced to Duty by Fear

Fear; whereas they who are Married to Christ, are more engaged and quickened by his Love, and the sweetness of his Yoke, than if Hell were opened before them. *The love of God constraineth us, &c.* 2 Cor: 5. 14. Rom: 8. 15. 2 Tim: 1. 7. 2dly. The Sorrows of the one flow chiefly from their having wounded an informed Conscience, and from their fear of Wrath, whereas their looking to the Lord Jesus, and the Shame for offending him, doth beyond all things melt the other into deep and kindly Sorrows, *I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and supplications, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one is in bitterness for his first born, Zach: 12. 10. Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? Deut. 32: 6. Neither after their Declinings can they reach kindly Resentments, but by renewed sights of Christ in a way of Believing.*

Sing 4. The Figg-Leaves of the Law, do always cover some reigning Lusts; but none of these bear Rule over such who are

are under Grace. *I esteem all thy Precepts concerning all things to be right, and I hate every false way,* Ps. 119. 128. see Rom. 6. 14. Ps. 66. 18.

EXERCISE V.

I Shall offer now some Discoveries of the Remainders of the Law in these who are in a state of Grace: A Subject which (for what I know) is seldom Treated. Forasmuch as the few who have written upon these Heads have chiefly insisted upon the reigning Power thereof.

I hope it will not be needful again to declare, that it's far from my Design, in the least to weaken the obliging force of the Law to the highest pitch of Perfection in Obedience; *Let us not be deceived, God will not be mocked, for whatsoever man soweth that shall he also reap:* The Harvest, beyond time, will assuredly answer the Seed and growth in it. I only consider it as opposed to Grace,
Rom.

Rom. 6. 14. And in so far as Corrupt Nature bendeth inward in Opposition to the continued going out of Self in a way of Believing, and in whatsoever way wherein it may be abused, when not used with an intire Subserviency to the Gospel Covenant, In these Respects, the following Remainders of a legal Principle in Believers may be considered,

1. It is no small Remainder of the Law to found our Confidence in Approaches to the Throne of Grace, upon any Spiritual Dispositions or Motions of the Soul (*Lord, by thy favour thou maidst my mountain to stand strong, &c. Ps. 30. 7, 8.*) These are indeed commendable in their own places, and to be thankfully acknowledged as Fruits of the Spirit, and are likewise so peremptorly required by the Lord, that it were detestable Profanity to despise them, *Let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear, Heb. 12. 28.* see Ps. 2. 11. Notwithstanding there is a vast difference betwixt that which is necessarily requisit in Divine Worship, and that upon which humble Confidence and Boldness in access to the Throne of Grace doth

doth rest as upon its Foundation. Though the Exercised Christian were *raised as to the third Heaven*, in respect of the Holiness of his Disposition; yet when he appeareth aright before the Lord, nothing of that may come under Consideration to lay the least stress thereupon, but on the contrary, the impression of the Vileness of *all his Righteousness* should be, and also is most lively at such times, *Isa: 64. 6. Phil. 3. 8, 9. 2 Cor: 12. 9, 10, 11.* and the Soul must settle upon the *alone Foundation Jesus Christ* Eying by Faith his Obedience, Sufferings and Intercessions with the Father, *1 Cor: 3. 11. Rom: 8. 34. Heb: 7. 25.* And howsoever Empty and Vile, the Person be, as a *bruised reed*, wholly useless, and a *smocking flax weik* (as the low *Dutch* will render it) without Light, and of a noisome savour, having nothing in reality, nor in the Eye, which he may call his own, but what he accounts at best *Loss and Dung*; yet he may draw Encouragement from the Mercat opened up to these who have neither *Money nor Price* *Isa: 42. 3. Chap: 55: 2, 3.* There is still access to the Publican to Pray, *Lord be merciful to me a Sinner*

Sinner : And howsoever the Fraine be, all our Encouragement must be Drawn from the Lord Jesus, and upon *this Foundation alone* we must wholly Build, otherways we stray from the sweet and close Path of Believing, by Adulterous Looks and Advances towards the Law, our first Husband, considered as in Opposition to Christ and the Gospel.

2dly. It is a Legal, in Opposition to a believing way, when the Person being sore Tempted turneth inward, that by his Tossings in a way of Reasoning, he may unfold the Deceits, and break the Strength of the Enemy ; Whereas, in a way of Believing, the Soul entertaineth no Expectation from its self, or all the Creatures besides, but under the Influences of the Spirit, hath its recourse wholly to God in Christ, under the Sense of Vileness and utter Insufficiency, *Jos. 15. 5. 2 Cor: 3. 5. & Chap. 10. 4. &c.* otherways the Temptation is not broken, but becometh Stronger under this Unsuitable way of Opposition, wholly contrary unto the Design of the Gospel. Neither shall a kindly Issue be reached till the exercised Christian be brought off these

By-

By-paths, to the Exercise of saving Faith, that so, by the Spirit, *The deeds of the body may be mortified*, Rom. 8. 13.

3. It is also a sad remainder of Unbelief, and an Abuse of the Law, to be Tossed hither and thither by Appearances, according as they are Favourable or Adverse, some times Hoping, at other times Fearing, and like to give it up, as *if one day we should fall by the hands of Saul*: And all this according as our Reasonings upon probable Grounds, seem to be of more or less force; Whereas, upon the contrary Faith, according to it's Measure, raiseth the Soul above these perplexing Thoughts and Tossings, forasmuch as this precious Faith knoweth no other Foundation, but the Word of the Lord to Build upon, from whence alone Conclusions are drawn, and the Soul is brought to a Point, whether things are, or are not, and what Judgment we are to pass concerning them, and whether they shall befall or not, howsoever contrary the strain of Appearances may be. *Shall a Child be born to him that is an Hundred Years Old?* Gen. 17. 17. *Shall the Flocks and the Herds be slain for*

them to suffice them? &c. Numb: 11. 22. see Luk. 24. 21. How lovely were it purely to believe, and to know no other Bottom than *thus saith the Lord*. Thus the Soul should *Converse* much in the Sanctuary, and know the Secrets of the Lord.

4. The intertaining Impressions of the Lord after saving Manifestations, as if he were a hard Master, doth likewise spring from this Bitter Root, as if he who hath declared himself to be *The Lord merciful and gracious*, &c. Exod: 34. 6, 7, would yet enter into Judgment with the Sinner after Intimations, Manifestations, and manifold Sealings of Pardon, which occasioneth much straitning of Heart in approaches to the Thron of Grace, as if the Lord would yet again remember Sin in a way of Justice; and take the poor Soul at an Advanrage; Whereas he hath declared, that tho' they, *viz.* Sins, were *as crimson, they shall be made white as snow*, upon believing Applications to him, Isa. 1. 18. And tho' the Scriptures be full of large Declarations of his Mercy through Christ, in this Respect, as to pass others, the *blotting out of sins, as a*
thick

thick cloud, casting them behind his back, and burying them in the depth sea, &c. do abundantly testifie; yet it is no small Matter in the throng of Temptations, especially vvhile under heavy Afflictions, firmly to believe this. From this same Root of *Unbelief* do flowv our Jealousies and Discouragements, as if that could not prosper, vvherein vve have sinfully failed in the Managment. We ought indeed to be deeply humbled before the Lord, for our many slips in going about vvhat may be materially Good; yet not to hang down the Head and Hands in Discouragment, but to take Courage in the exercise of Faith, committing our way unto the Lord, resting in him, and believing that he will bring to pass vvhatsoever is for his Honour and our Good, *Pf. 37. 3. 5. Prov. 3. 5, 6.*

5. Of the same kind are Discontents, Discouragments, and manifold Frettings against the Lord, vvvhich exceedingly marrGospel-Sorrovv for Sin, and especially vvhen vve have by our Rashness and the precipitant Motions of our irregular Passions, Prejudged our selves as to Respect amongst Men, or other Enjoyments

ments, great are the Confusions of the Mind, and Advantages of Temptations over us in this Case, till the Soul be humbled and quieted, and so brought to a kindly Exercise of Repentance, and Sorrow after a godly manner, 2 Cor: 7. 10, 11. and being set in Joint, and restored to the pleasant Breathings of Faith, is again, and yet further Establish'd, by casting all his Care upon the Lord, 1 Pet. 5. 7. Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee, &c. Ps. 55. 22. Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established, Prov. 16. 3. see Phil. 4. 6.

6. From the same Root do spring perplexing Fears and Discouragements of these who fear the Lord under his afflicting Hand, as if he were Chastising in Wrath, and as an offended Judge. O Lord rebuke me not in thine anger, &c. Ps. 6. 1, 2. where-as he, as a Gracious Father, doth cast the Believer into the Furnace for his Purifying, Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, &c. Heb. 12. 6, 7. see 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7. More especially is this found, when the Righteous Lord shineth forth in a way of Judgment, against a wicked Generation, while notwithstanding his Voice to Zions Mourners, is, Fear not ye, I know

whom ye seek, ye seek Jesus, Mark 16. 6.
 Ezek: 9: 4: Assuredly nothing shall befall them but Good, or that which, with other things, shall work together for their Good, tho' they be under many Pressures of Trouble, while Unbelief and Temptations conspire; whereas others Solace themselves, to whom the Lord saith, *Rejoice not for joy as other people, for thou hast gone a whoring from thy God*, Hos: 9: 1. And Vengeance shall assuredly overtake the impenitent Sinner.

7. As from other Lusts, so likewise from this grand Evil of Unbelief, and abuse of the Law, doth that Spiritual Weariness flow, whereby the Edge of the Soul is blunted, and it driveth heavily for a time, more from the pressure of an enlightened Conscience, than with that Sweetness which at other times it felt (*Thou wilt shew me the path of life, in thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for ever more*, Ps. 16. 11.) And howsoever it be, neither possible, nor doth the Lord require a continual bending of the Spirit in direct Spiritual Exercises, which would certainly break it; yet the bearing Christ's sweet Yoke, whether in Religious Duties, or our Ordinary Walk, will

will certainly be found pleasant, tho not with equal Intensness of Mind at all times, *Mat: 11, 29. 3:* And in so far as the Conduct of the Spirit from the Word is sincerely followed, without straying out of the Gospel-way; This Sweetness will be enjoy'd. But forasmuch as, through our Corruption we weary our selves in a selfish and legal way, and that a Gospel Disposition and Carriage is wholly Supernatural; and against corrupt Nature; It needs not be wondrous at, (seeing the Law hath not the Promises, or Administration of the Spirit) that such a way of Acting be wearisome, and the sweetness of Wisdoms paths missed for a time by a Declining towards it.

8. So much of vexing Fear and Constraint by which the Soul is Influenced in the Lord's Work, rather by Threatnings and the pressings of an inlightned Conscience, than the sweet force of constraining Love, and the pleasantness of Wisdoms paths. I say, so much as is found of the one, and wanting of the other, doth flow from a legal Root, *Rom: 8. 15. Gal: 4. 6, 7. Heb: 12. 18, 19, 20.* compared with verse 22, 23.

9. Aversion from applying to God in
N 2 Christ

Christ, in a way of Believing, because of the greatness of Sin, floweth from this bitter Root, and is contrary to the strain and design of the Gospel. *Tho your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; tho they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool,* Is. 1. 18. see Ps. 25. 11. Acts 2. 37. 1 Cor. 6. 11. for howsoever the Gospel doth not Extenuate, but highly Aggravate Sin (and whatsoever Doctrines under that Pretence do not Alarm, but Flatter the secure and unhumbléd Sinner are wholly contrary to the great Scope of it) yet the greatness of Sin ought not to be Discouraging, but to be Encouraging to flee into the Lord Jesus by Faith; the fulness of whose Sufferings, Sufficiency and Willingness to seek and save lost Sinners, is abundantly holden forth in it.

EXERCISE VI. *Use of Exhortation.*

I Shall issue the whole into a double Use of Exhortation. 1. To these under the *Law*, as opposed to *Grace*, seek to be delivered from it in that regard, that you may be brought into a Conforming to it, by drawing Virtue from Christ for that effect. A legal Principle doth not
further

further, but wholly subverteth true Obedience; not one Act of which can be performed but by Faith, and under the Influences of the Spirit of Christ. Take the following Motives. not to drive you inward, but, through Grace, to draw you out of *your Selves* to the Lord Jesus, for making them Effectual.

Motive 1. The Law requireth compleat Perfection of the whole Man, in all his Powers and Faculties to every part thereof, and that in the highest Degree, and with Perseverance unto the End: Nor can any Favour be expected upon other Terms throughout this Channel, *Math: 22. 37. Deut: 27. 26. Gal: 3. 10.*

2. Hence, the Law accepteth no Endeavour, and nothing below this compleat Conformity. *Motive 3.* Man is utterly unable for any one Act of Obedience, as much as the Dead are for the Business of Life: And besides, altogether an Enemy in his Mind by Wicked Works, *Eph: 2. 1. Rom: 8. 7. Eph: 4. 19. & 5. 8.* *Motive 4.* No strength for performing any thing can flow in into the Soul by the Law, *2 Cor: 3. 7.* for as opposed to the Gospel *it is a dead Letter*, the Mini-

nistratation of Death and Condemnation.
Motive 5: Therefore it speaketh nothing but *Wrath to us*, Condemning us for the Transgressions of it, *Rom: 4. 5. 15.* But notwithstanding, requiring its full Claim.
Motive 6. Its painted Performances have nothing of true value in them, being but shining Sins; For *whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin*, much like unto the fordid Work of the Prodigal, when keeping the Swine (as is represented in the Parable) and yet perishing for Hunger, *Luk: 15. 15. Rom: 14: Heb: 11. 5.* *Motive. 7.* Seeming legal Attainments are but as the *House built upon the Sand*, which cannot resist the Fury of Storms and Winds, *Mat. 7. 28.* Yea, the least blast of Temptation will easily over-turn the greatest Fabricks of this kind. I might add many other Motives, but that several Practical Writers have handled this very largely, and divers of them are obvious to the Exercised Soul.

8 NO 59

For Means, with an Eye to the Mighty Power of God for setting them on, I offer these in a word,
Direction 1. Study the Law, or rather seek from the Lord a discovery of its Spirituality, and vast Extent, *Rom: 7. from verse 7. Gal. 4. 21.* The proper mean to be brought off from all Expectations

tions that way, is to be well acquainted with the the Law. *Direct. 2.* In the Lord's Strength, and under the Influences of Grace, bring your selves to the Touch-stone, and seek to behold your Hearts and Ways in this Glass, *Ja: 1. 23, 24, 25.* Assuredly then, if the Eye be opened, the loathsomeness of our Righteousness must needs appear.

Direct. 3. Labour under the Influences of Heaven, to make the true Improvement of your Troubles, Fears, and manifold Slips, for the weaning of your Soul from this Husband. Endeavours to help these in a legal way, will but increase them, and *Sin by the Commandment*, will become exceeding sinful. All legal Essays do but quicken Self instead of killing it, the Language of the Dispensation is certainly to drive out of *Self unto Christ*, that what the Law cannot do in that it is weak through the *Flesh*, may be performed by him, and the Righteousness of the Law *may be fulfilled in us*, *Rom: 8. 3,*

Direct. 4. In the fourth place, The Chief and Great Mean which I would Recommend for this, is, *viz. Seek for clear and still growing Discoveries of Christ*, *2 Cor. 4. 6.* For according as the Mind is inlightned in the Knowledge of him, so this Evil Root, with whatsoever springeth from it, is more or less weakned, and it will be found, as the first shining of saving Light into the Soul by the Manifestation of Jesus Christ, bringeth the Person from under the Law, as opposed to Grace; so every degree of Increase in this, raiseth to the greater hight of the Liberty of the Sons of God.

Exhortation 2. I shall now shut up the whole with a Word to them that are under Grace; I would then Exhort these to seek for Deliverance from the remainders of this Evil. And to inforce the

the Exhortation, I would obtest that the following prejudices sustained by it, may be seriously ponder'd

1. This is the Cause of many Failings and much Sin, for that the Law hath not the Promises of the Spirit, and whatsoever in us is leaned to, must of necessity fail us, *Pf: 30. 7. 2 Cor: 3. 7.* as Military Shoes were necessary Defences for the Feet, *Eph: 6. 15.* So, for steady walking in the way of God, it is necessary, that *the Feet be Shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace.* The Soul being cast into an Evangelical Mould, and its Motions running in that strain.

2. Hence floweth the Spirit's with-drawing in the most pleasant Seasons, when the Soul turneth inward, and declineth from a way of believing by Acting from *Self*, and leaning to the *Arm of Flesh*, *Jer: 17. 5, 6. Prov: 3: 5, 6:*

3. from this ariseth also so much Inequality in Obedience and want of Comfort, *Ro: 7. 9, 10.*

4. Thus Temptations are not broken, but strengthned, such weapons being not only insufficient, but turning back and wounding ourselves: The true use of the whole armour of God, is, by going on of our selves in the prayer of Faith, *Eph: 6. 18.*

As for Means, I shall not need to say much to you, who know the way, being acquainted with living the life which you live in the flesh, by faith in the Son of God. Only in a word take these. *Direct: 1. Seek clearer Discoveries of Christ. Direct: 2. Seek more quickning in Faith. Luk: 17. 5. for living by it, and thus drawing virtue from the Lord Jesus, is the true Gospel way: Only let us beware of spinning this faith out of our own Bowels, but let it be exercised in a single Dependence upon the spirit of Faith. 2 Cor: 4. 13. Direct: 3. When the Soul is brought to somewhat of the Exercise of saving Faith, and the Enemies are made to give back, O pursue in the Lords strength, do not weary, nor sit down in a way of sloath, they will not fail to rally, and return again, lose not the Advantage over a fleeing Enemy, but resist, not discouraged from growing Difficulties, but stedfast in the Faith, 1 Pet: 5. 8, 9.*

And so much for this purpose, not to make void the Law, but to Establish it, by teaching to receive it from Christ's Mouth, and in his Strength to obey it, for thus doth spiritual life breathe; and the Body without the Spirit (or Breathing, as the the word may be rendered) is dead; So that Faith, which doth not influence by the Spirit of Christ to the greatest strictness of Obedience, is assuredly Dead also.

F I N I S.